

CRIME
and
JUSTICE

CRIME

and JUSTICE



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LWC

NO. 11

The image features a dense background collage of vintage comic book covers. Titles visible include "Supermouse", "JETTA", "MYSTERY COMICS", "FANTASTIC TALES", "COSMO CAT", "STARTLING COMICS", "STRANGE MYSTERIES", "DARING ADVENTURES", "FAMOUS FUNNIES", "HILARIOUS RAUCOUS", "TEEN-AGE SWEETHEART OF THE 21st CENTURY", "DUCK", "EERIE", "EXCITING COMICS", "CASPER CAT", "BARNYARD COMICS", and "STRANGE WORLDS". The covers depict various genres including superhero action, mystery, science fiction, and humor. Overlaid on this collage is a large, dark purple speech bubble with a thick black outline. Inside the bubble, the text "WEB COMIC UNIVERSE.COM" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font with a slight drop shadow effect.

CRIME clues

A SIMPLE CASE OF MURDER!



WE **CAN'T** GO ON LIKE THIS, STAN, WE'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT **YOUR WIFE!**

SHE WON'T GIVE ME A DIVORCE, DIANE. THERE'S ONLY **ONE** WAY...

NEXT EVENING...

GILDA, YOU KNOW STAN AND I ARE IN LOVE. WHY DON'T YOU...

THE ONLY WAY YOU'LL EVER GET STAN IS OVER MY **DEAD BODY!**

NO SOONER SAID THAN DONE, DARLING!

INSPECTOR DAN LOGAN IS CALLED IN ON THE CASE WHEN STAN REPORTS HIS WIFE'S DEATH TO THE POLICE.

I JUST RETURNED FROM A DRIVE IN THE COUNTRY AND FOUND HER LIKE THIS. SOME PROWLER MUST HAVE KILLED HER.

THIS CERTAINLY WAS NO NIGHT TO GO JOY RIDING WITH THIS DRIVING RAIN!



THEN I'M ARRESTING YOU ON SUSPICION OF **MURDER!**

IN THE GARAGE...

DID YOU STOP FOR GAS OR MEET ANYONE ON YOUR DRIVE?

NO... I... I... DIDN'T...



WHAT CLUE DID INSPECTOR LOGAN HAVE THAT TOLD HIM THAT STAN MIGHT BE GUILTY? INVERT PAGE FOR LIFE SENTENCE. ...WHEN DIANE RECEIVED A FINAL CONFESSIO... THE WIPER DIDN'T REACH STAN HAVE BEEN SPOTS WERE WINDSHIELD THERE WOULD CLEAN, EVEN ON THE PERFECTLY DRY AND THE CAR WAS SOLUTION!

LOW MORALES

CRIME AND JUSTICE

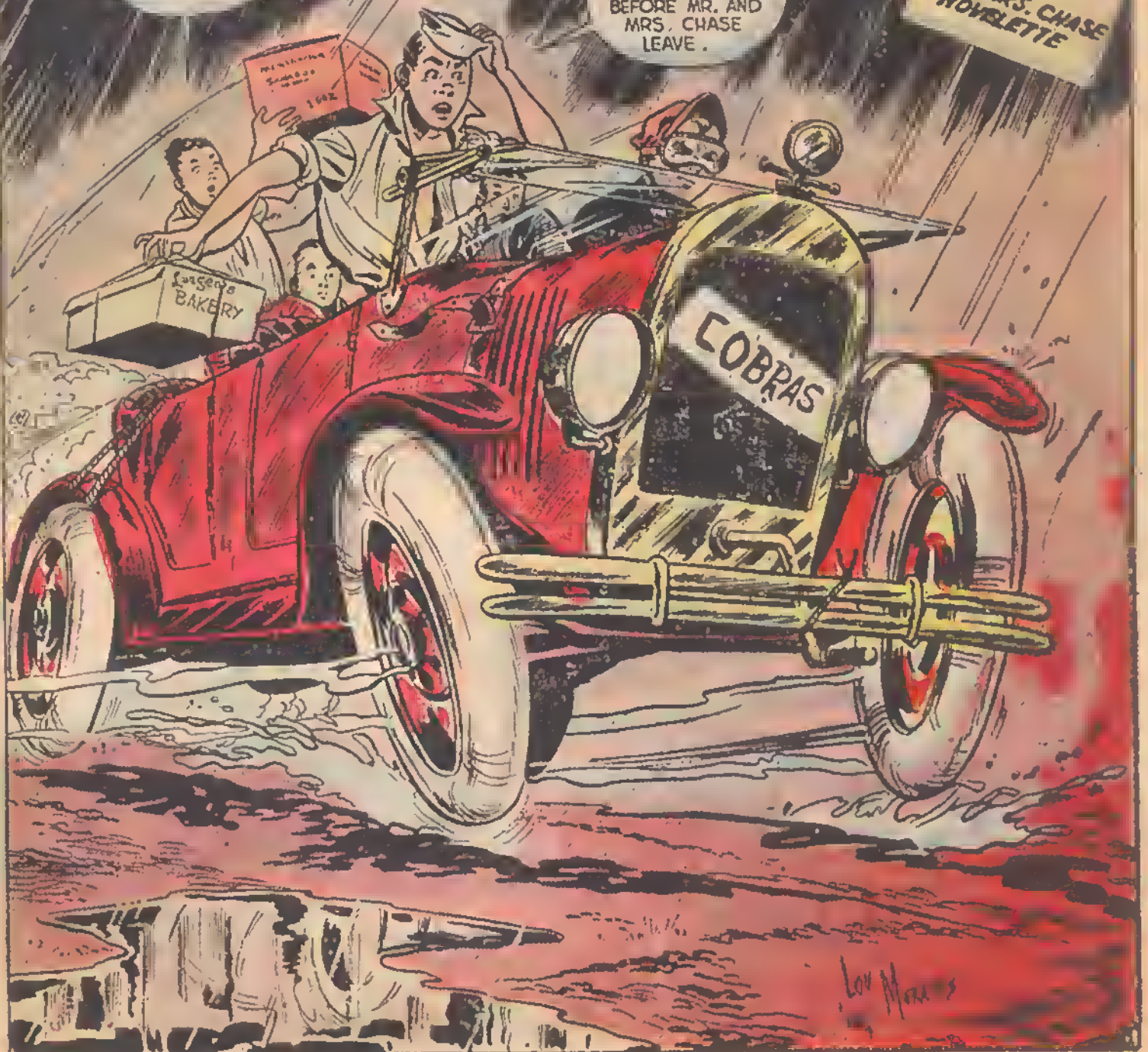
MERRY AND CURTIS CHASE FIND A HELPING, IF NOT LIFE SAVING, HAND IN FIVE SPIRITED MEMBERS OF OUR YOUNGER GENERATION IN THIS MONTH'S MR. AND MRS. CHASE NOVELETTE. A NARCOTICS RING, A WEIRD MANSION INHABITED BY LIVE CROCODILES, STUFFED ANIMALS, AND A MILLION-PIECE OF DUBIOUS SANITY, COMBINE WITH A RICKETY, RUSTED HOT-ROD AND A FIVE MAN RESCUE SQUAD (LABELLED 'THE COBRAS A.C.') TO CARRY MERRY AND CURTIS THROUGH A RAIN-LASHED NIGHT OF EERIE HOWLS, HAIR-RAISING SHRIEKS, AND **MURDER!**

The COBRAS

HEY! IT'S
STARTING TO
RAIN!

FEED THOSE
CARBS, TIGER. WE
GOTTA GET THERE
BEFORE MR. AND
MRS. CHASE
LEAVE.

A
MR. & MRS. CHASE
NOVELETTE



CRIME AND JUSTICE

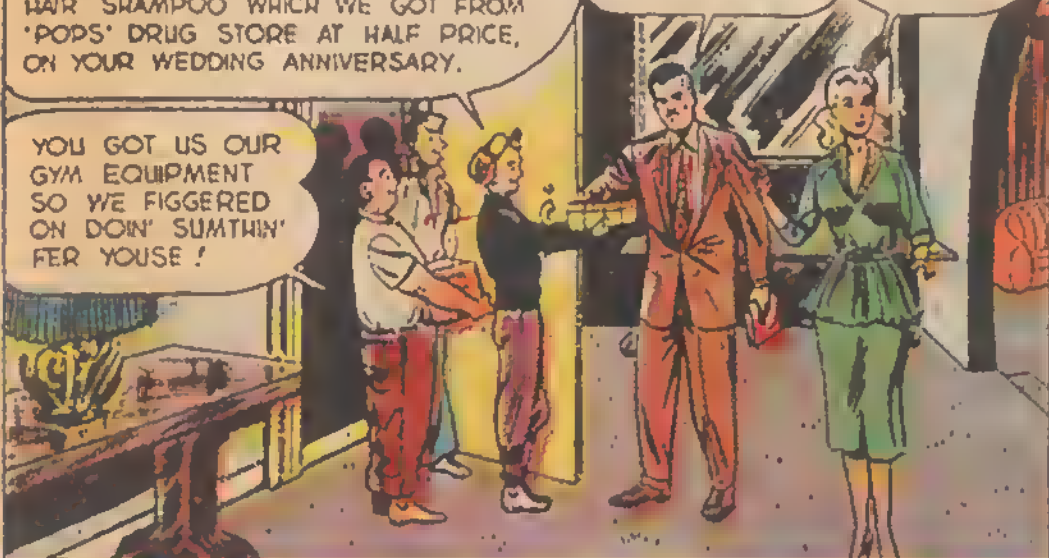
MR. AND MRS. CHASE, IT IS WITH GREAT HONOR THAT WE MEMBERS OF THE COBRAS A.C. PRESENT YOU WITH THIS HERE CAKE AND A CASE OF ZUDZY HAIR SHAMPOO WHICH WE GOT FROM 'POPS' DRUG STORE AT HALF PRICE, ON YOUR WEDDING ANNIVERSARY.

BOYS, THIS IS INDEED A SURPRISE AND PLEASURE...

OOPS! THE PHONE. I'LL GET IT CURT.

YES? WESTMORELAND COLLIER! THE MR. COLLIER FROM LONG ISLAND? AND MR. CHASE CAN NAME HIS PRICE IF HE WILL INVESTIGATE THE ODD GOINGS ON AT YOUR ESTATE! VERY WELL, MR. COLLIER, WE'LL BE READY WHEN YOUR HELICOPTER GETS HERE.

YOU GOT US OUR GYM EQUIPMENT SO WE FIGGERED ON DOIN' SUMTHIN' FER YOUSE!



HELICOPTER! WE'LL GO WITH YOU, MR. CHASE!

SORRY, KIDS, THIS IS STRICTLY BUSINESS. WE'LL JUST PACK TWO SUITCASES, MERRY.

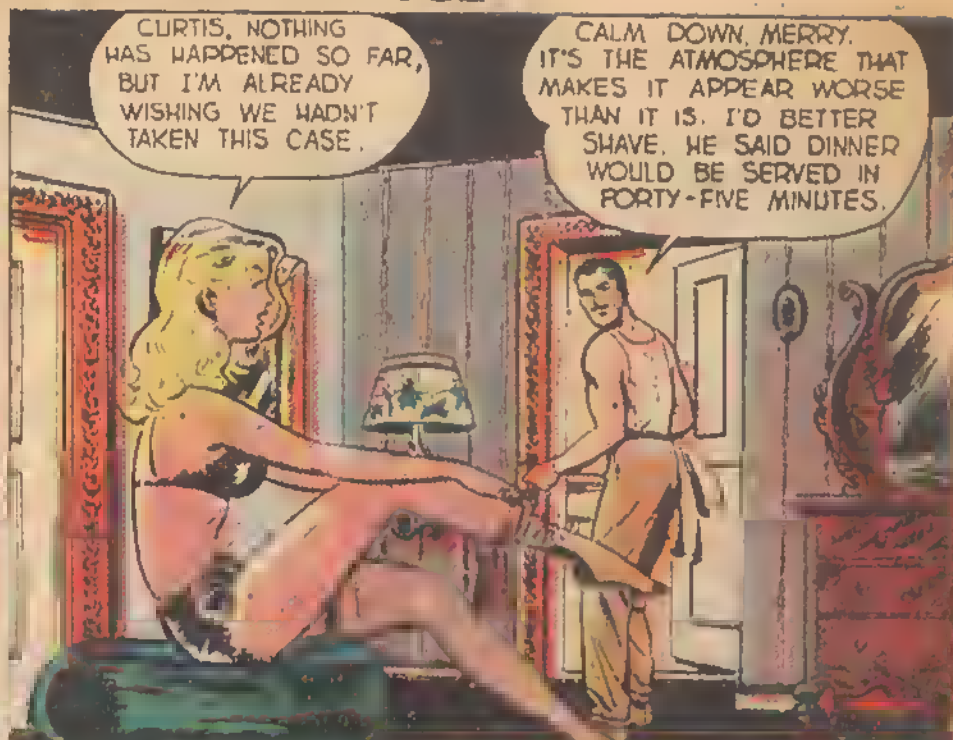
ALL SET, HONEY? HERE'S COLLIER'S HELICOPTER LOWERING A LADDER NOW.



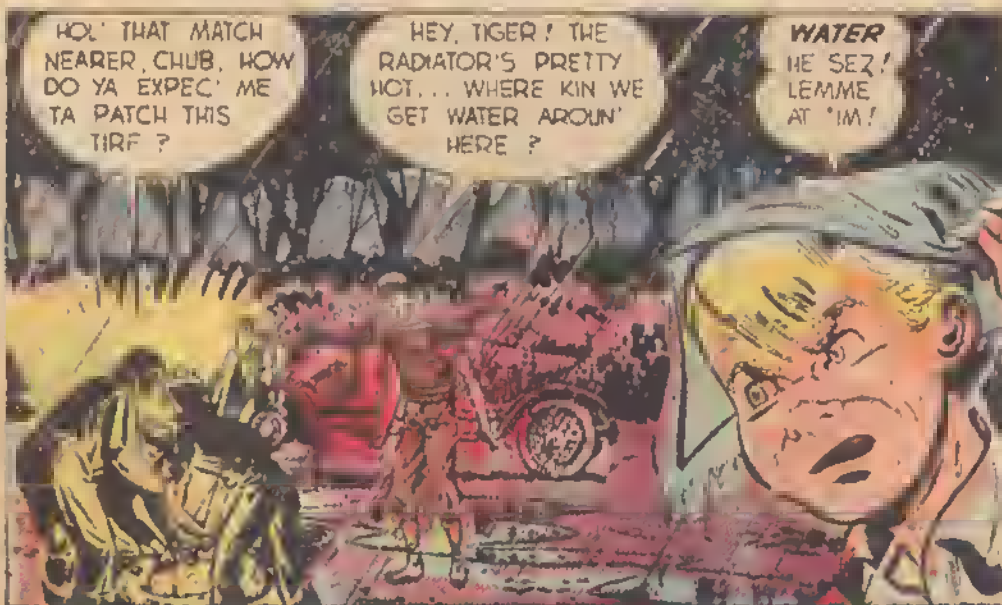
I GOT A FEELIN' THEY'LL NEED HELP! I HEARD ME OLE MAN SAY THIS GUY COLLIER IS A CREEP. WHATTAYA SAY WE HOP IN OUR RUST BUCKET AN' HEAD OUT THERE?



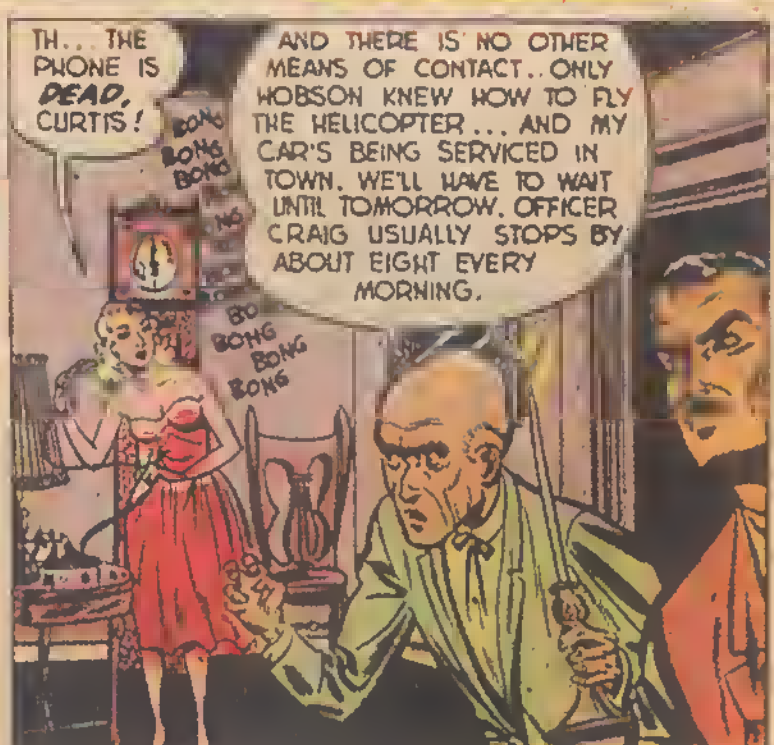
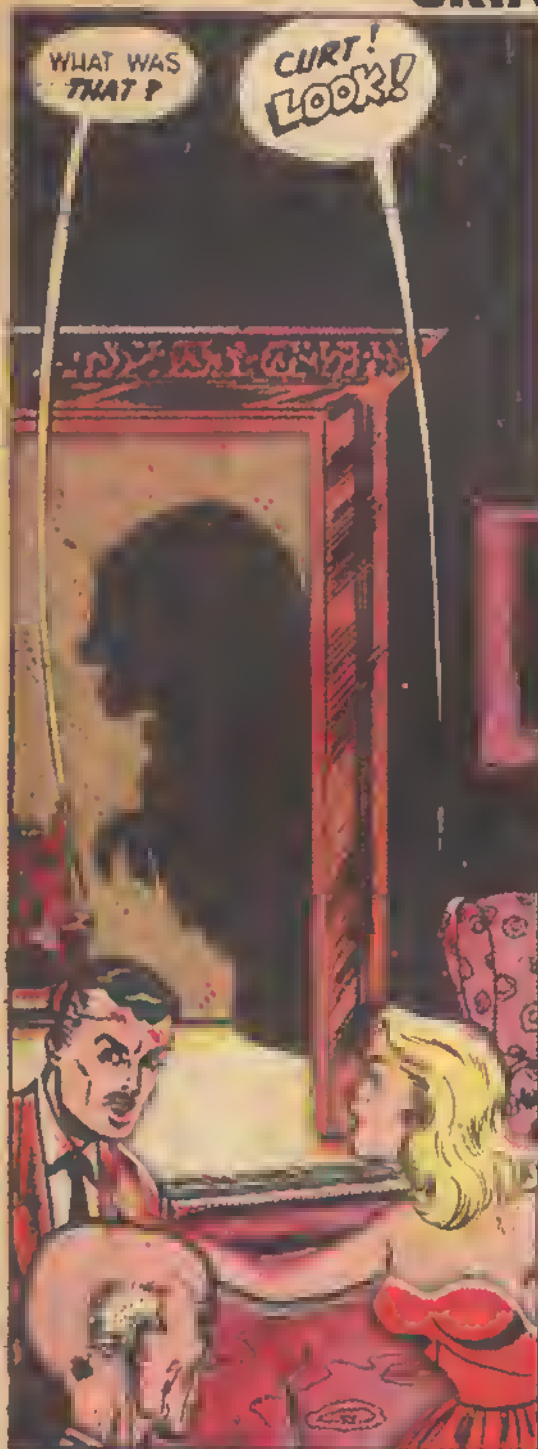
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AND AS WESTMORELAND COLLIER AND MERRY AND CURTIS CHASE CONTINUE THEIR DINNER IN THE EERIE FLICKERING OF THE WISPY CANDLELIGHT, TWENTY SEVEN MILES DOWN THE LONELY WINDING ROAD ANOTHER WEAK FLAME BRAVELY FIGHTS THE ELEMENTS...



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WE'D BEST ALL GO TO... ER... BED. LOCK YOUR DOORS. I'LL... AH... COVER HOBSON'S BODY.

I'D LIKE TO LOOK AROUND RIGHT NOW, IF YOU DON'T MIND, MR. COLLIER.

WELL, I'M GOING TO SLEEP. I'LL WAIT 'TIL DAY-LIGHT BEFORE PLAYING BOY-SCOUT.

VERY WELL, MR. CHASE. I... AH... DON'T KNOW WHERE HOBSON KEPT THE FLASHLIGHT, BUT YOU CAN USE THIS LANTERN IF YOU WANT TO...

FIRST... I'D LIKE TO TAKE A LOOK AT THOSE PETS...

IT SURE IS DARK IN THERE, HE MENTIONED POOL... I WONDER WHAT SORT OF...

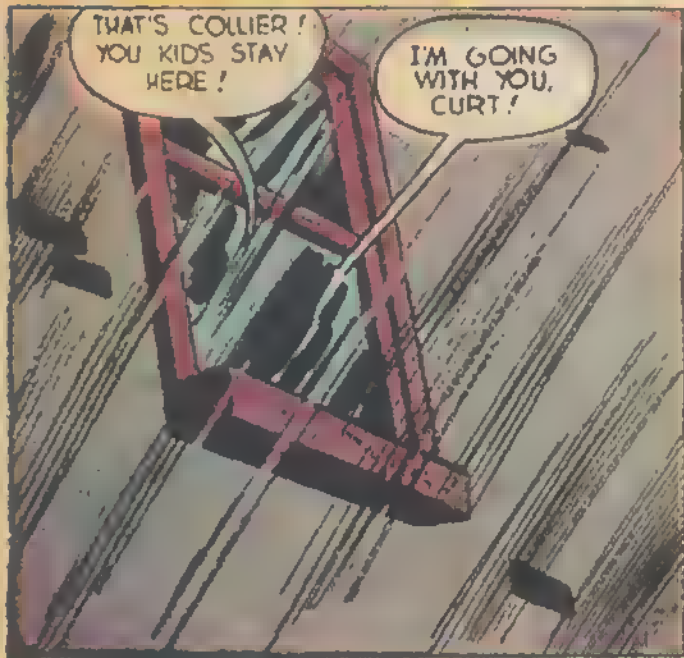
EEEEK

CURT!
HELP! HELP!
IT'S COMING IN THE WINDOW!

GEEZZ! WE'RE SORRY WE SCART YA, MRS. CHASE. WE KNOCKED AT THE DOOR BUT GOT NO ANSWER....

DON'T **EVER** PULL A STUNT LIKE THAT AGAIN. ANYWAY, WHAT ARE YOU KIDS DOING HERE?

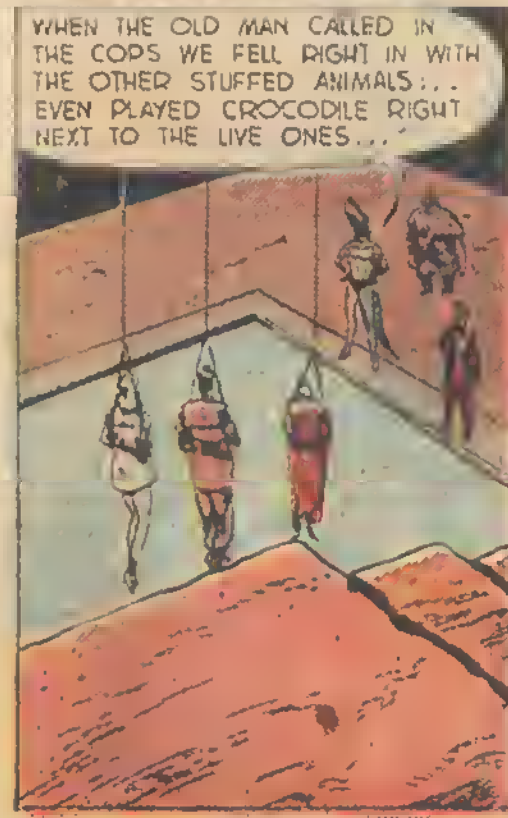
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AS CURT AND MERRY DASH INTO WESTMORELAND COLLIER'S ROOM...



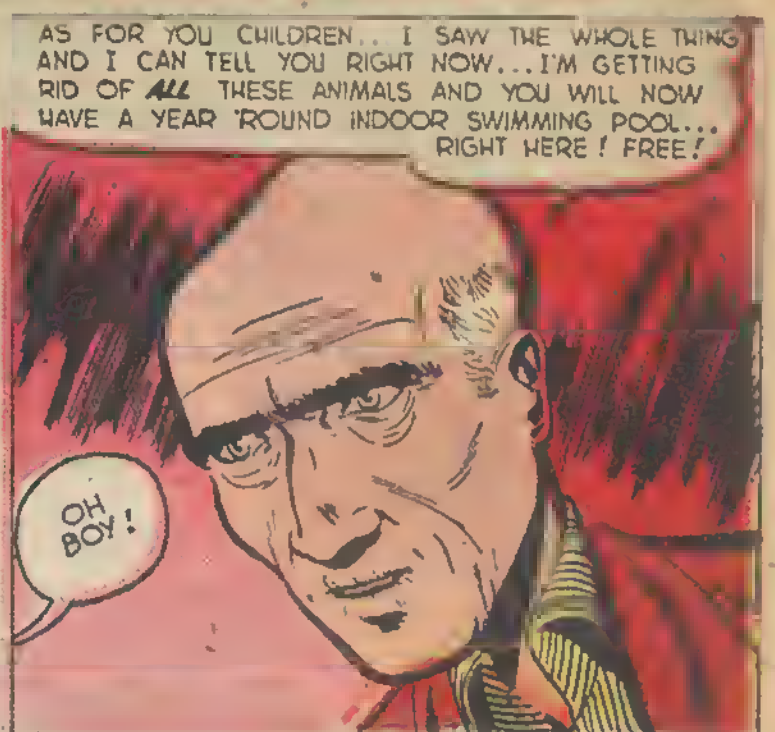
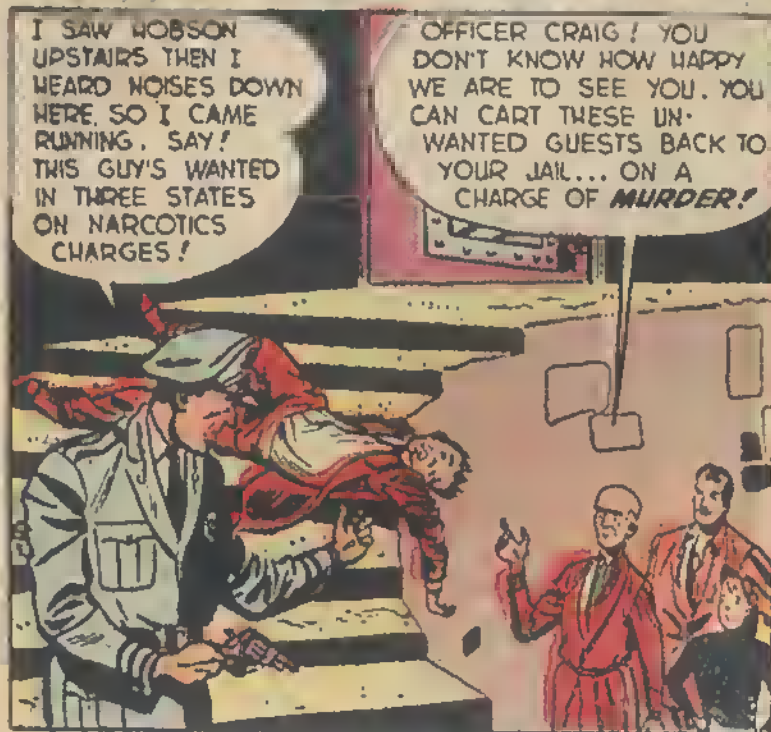
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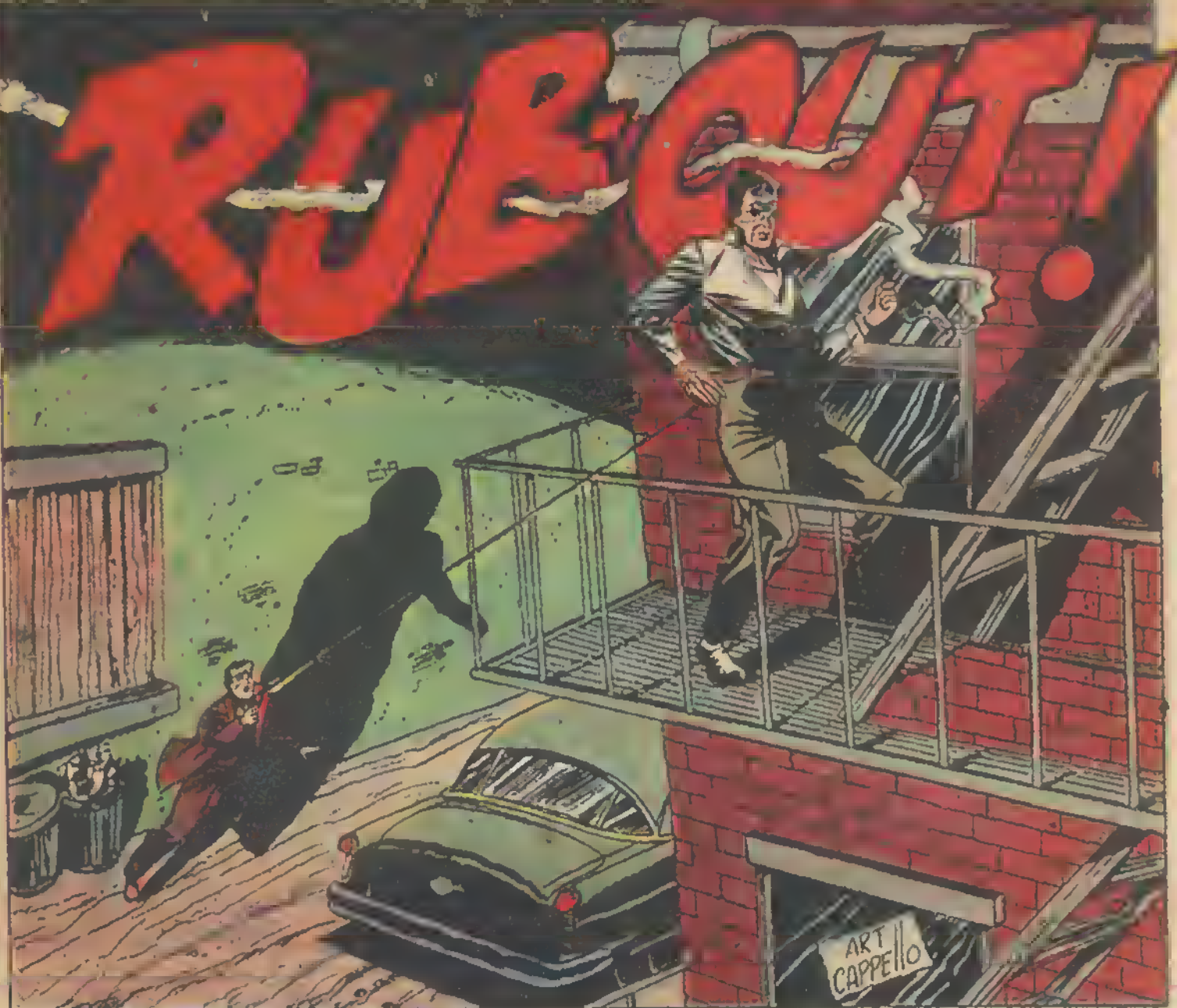


CRIME AND JUSTICE



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IT'S BEEN A WELL ESTABLISHED FACT THAT A LITTLE KNOWLEDGE CAN BE A DANGEROUS THING, AND SO IT WAS THAT THE CRIME SYNDICATE, DESPITE ALL ITS ELABORATE PRECAUTIONS AND PAYOFFS, WAS PLACED IN JEOPARDY DUE TO THE LIMITED KNOW HOW OF ONE AMATEUR GUINMAN, USEFUL OF JOINING THE RANKS OF ORGANIZED CRIME, WHEN HE UNDERTOOK TO PERFORM A...



NOW THAT YOU'RE OUT OF THE HOSPITAL, KELSEY, YOU CAN START GETTIN' ACQUAINTED WITH YOUR NEW HOME... AND IT'S GONNA BE HOME TO YOU FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE!

IT AIN'T EXACTLY WHAT I'M USED TO, BUT THEY TELL ME THE RENT'S LOWER HERE...

SO WHAT ARE YOU STILL HANGIN' AROUND FOR? WANT TO SEE WHAT 'BOSS' KELSEY'LL DO NOW THAT THEY FINALLY GOT HIM, HUH? WELL, THEY DIDN'T GET ME THROUGH ANY FAULT OF MINE, SEE... LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT IT...



CRIME AND JUSTICE



"MY BIGGEST REGRET IS THAT WAGNER DIDN'T KILL 'LIPPY' SOME THAT NIGHT IN THE ALLEY... IF HE HAD, I WOULDN'T BE HERE NOW. IT ALL STARTED A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO WHEN LIPPY, WHO'D NEVER BEEN ANYTHING BUT A YOUNG, IGNORANT PUNK, WANTED TO HAIL DOWN A SPOT FOR HIMSELF WITH THE SYNDICATE... MY SYNDICATE!"



BUT YOU'RE RIGHT NEXT TO BOSS KELSEY, MR. WILDE... YOU COULD GET ME INTO THE SYNDICATE IF YOU WANTED...

WHAT WAS A PUNK LIKE YOU EVER DONE BUT SKIP SCHOOL AND WEIST AUTO TIRES, SOBLE? YOU GOT NOTHIN' THE SYNDICATE WANTS!"

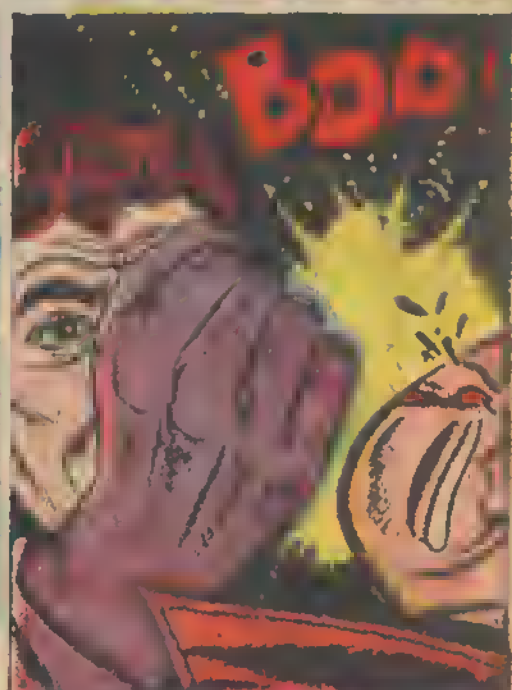


I'M AS TOUGH AS ANY TORPEDO YOU GOT... I CAN DO THE STRONG ARM STUFF FOR YOU! YOU THINK I AIN'T TOUGH? SEE THAT BIG JERK COMIN' DOWN THE WALK? WATCH!"



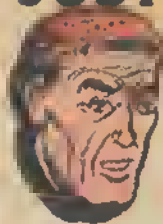
YOU GOT A MATCH, FELLA?

SURE THING...



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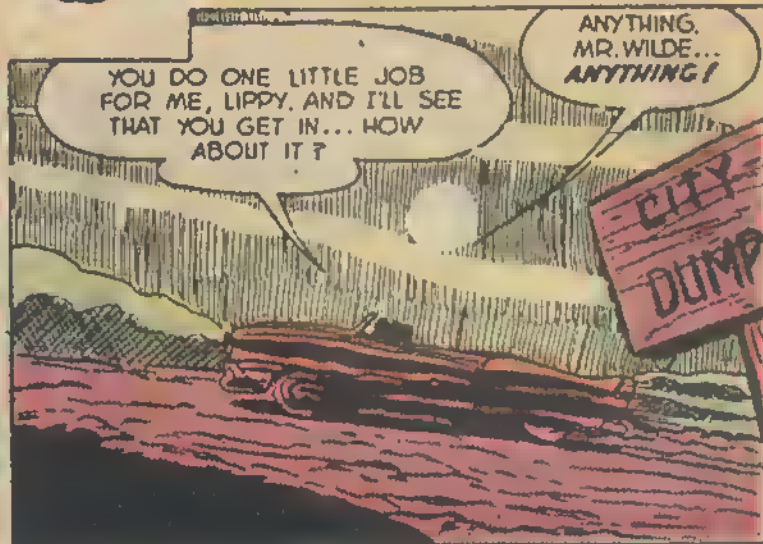
ENOUGH, KID. ENOUGH! YOU WANT TO KILL HIM RIGHT HERE ON THE STREET CORNER?



MY RIGHT HAND MAN, BERT WILDE, THEN MADE SOBLE A PROPOSITION... AND THAT WAS THE BEGINNING OF THE END OF AN ORGANIZATION THAT HAD TAKEN ME YEARS AND A YOUNG FORTUNE IN PAY-OFF MONEY TO BUILD...

YOU DO ONE LITTLE JOB FOR ME, LIPPY, AND I'LL SEE THAT YOU GET IN... HOW ABOUT IT?

ANYTHING, MR. WILDE... ANYTHING!



THERE'S A LIEUTENANT WORKS OUT OF THE FIFTH PRECINCT, NAME OF WAGNER... MAYBE YOU KNOW OF HIM. IT'D BE TO MY PERSONAL ADVANTAGE TO HAVE HIM LAID AWAY WITH FLOWERS. YOU LAY HIM AWAY... I'LL SEND THE FLOWERS!



I KNOW THAT RAT... HE PULLED ME IN FOR SHOPLIFTING ONCE! THIS'LL BE A PLEASURE!

USE THIS ROD ON HIM. IT'S A STOLEN GUN, SO WHEN YOU'RE FINISHED WITH IT, WIPE IT CLEAN AND HEAVE IT IN THE RIVER.



WENT OFF TONIGHT, LIEUTENANT WAGNER

FIRST IN TWO WEEKS! I'M GONNA SPEND IT SITTING AT HOME IN AN EASY CHAIR WITH THE WIFE AND KIDS WATCHING A T.V. SET WE JUST GOT YESTERDAY. GIVE ME ONE OF THOSE T.V. PROGRAM BOOKS, TOO, LARRY.



BUT THE LIEUTENANT'S PLANS WERE DUE TO BE INTERRUPTED, FOR ALL EVENING HE HAD BEEN TRAILED BY SOBLE, AND NOW THE YOUNG WOULD BE KILLER WAS READY TO STRIKE!



CRIME AND JUSTICE

SOBLE TOOK CAREFUL AIM AT THE RETREATING, BACK OF THE POLICE LIEUTENANT... AND FIRED!



BUT THIS WAS LIPPY SOBLE'S FIRST EXPERIENCE WITH AN AUTOMATIC PISTOL, AND THE BACK-LASH OF THE HEAVY CALIBRE WEAPON PUT HIS FIRST BULLET TOO HIGH AND THE SECOND TO ONE SIDE OF THE OFFICER...



THE SLUG STRUCK THE BRICK WALL JUST IN FRONT OF SOBLE'S FACE, SENDING PARTICLES OF BRICK FLYING AND CUTTING INTO HIS FLESH AND HALF BLINDING HIM.



BARELY ABLE TO SEE, THE YOUNG THUG RAN FOR IT, AND ONLY A CAR COMING BETWEEN HIM AND LIEUTENANT WAGNER, FORCING THE OFFICER TO HOLD HIS FIRE, PROLONGED HIS LIFE.



IT'S A DEAD-END! THE FIRE ESCAPE... IT'S MY ONLY CHANCE! IF I CAN JUST GET TO THE ROOF...



BETTER THROW NUTS TO YOU, COPPER! AWAY THE GUN AND GIVE IT UP, FELLA! YOU'RE A PERFECT TARGET FROM DOWN HERE...



CRIME AND JUSTICE



ANYTHING TO OBLIGE, BUDDY...



SO FAR, SO GOOD... BUT WAGNER'S SLUG GOT THE PUNK UNDER HIS RIGHT SHOULDER AND WENT CLEAR THROUGH... IT DIDN'T KILL HIM. THEY PICKED HIM UP OFF THE FLOOR OF THE ALLEY AND CARTED HIM TO THE HOSPITAL. WHEN HE CAME AROUND, WAGNER OFFERED TO GET HIM OFF WITH A TWENTY YEAR JOLT IF HE SPILLED WHO PUT HIM UP TO IT...

...AND THE FIRST I KNEW OF THE WHOLE THING, WAGNER HAD THE GOODS ON US AND I WAS HAVIN' VISITORS!



KEEP YOUR HANDS WHERE WE CAN SEE 'EM, BOYS! WE'RE GOIN' DOWN TOWN...

SAYS YOU, COPPER...

YEAH! SAYS ME, KELSEY!



DON'T SHOOT ME! I SURRENDER!

NOW YOU'RE GETTIN' SMART, SONNY...

KPOW!

ONE HUNDRED AND NINETY-NINE YEARS! FOR ONCE I REGRET THAT THE NATURE OF THE CONVICTIONS DO NOT ALLOW THE STATE TO AVAIL ITSELF OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT...



SOBLE'S OVER IN THE PRISON HOSPITAL RIGHT NOW. THEY'LL BE TRANSFERRIN' HIM TO THE CELL BLOCK HERE, SOON'S THAT BULLET HOLE GETS HEALED UP... AND WHEN THEY DO...



THE END

ED OF EVERYTHING BUT CARRIAGE THE STATUE OF...

PLAINLY POISON

Howard Rementer seemed the picture of happiness and contentment as he relaxed on the easy chair. He was watching a young boy fishing from the nearby stream. Then he turned to his wife, Elaine, who was seated next to him. He ran his hand through her lovely blonde hair.

"Doesn't take much to make that youngster contented," he said with just a trace of bitterness in his voice. "Now if it would only make you happy when we fished, all our problems would be so easily solved. Why do you want another mink coat, another car, and another trip to Europe?"

Elaine knew how to handle her husband. She just pouted her lips and gave him a very simple and logical answer.

"You knew I was expensive to keep when you married me. No false pretenses. But if you don't figure out what to do with your Aunt Emma, I have an idea we won't get a cent when she dies."

Howard had the reply at the tip of his tongue. "For the last five years we have been waiting for her to die, so we could enjoy her millions. She is so tight that when she gets a nickel into her hands, it just goes out of circulation. This summer home atop Mount Belasco is her only luxury and she won't even hire a servant. Maybe she figured it was cheaper to marry Max than to pay him wages."

At the mention of Max, Elaine's face showed the rage and anger beneath that she had been concealing.

"He never was anything else but a cook. Those stories of his great wealth in Africa were just fairy tales. But you know your Aunt Emma. This was her one and only great love, though it came half a century too late. Willard Simpson will be here in about an hour. And when she calls for that lawyer of hers, it can mean only one thing. She is going to change her will again."

"Stop worrying that lovely head of yours," scolded Howard with mock solemnity in his

voice. "We're going to get every cent that is coming to us. Just wait and see."

Max Lubber was a heavy-set man who liked to take care of things around the house. It was his pet saying that life must always follow a routine. And every afternoon at five he served iced tea. He would go to the refrigerator and take out an ice cube tray, remove the ice cubes and put two in a glass. Then he would place the glasses on a tray and carry the tray to the table on the veranda. He would make the tea and let it cool. Then he would pour the tea into the glasses. The only thing peculiar about the routine was the fact he never drank tea himself.

They were all around the table now. The lawyer, Aunt Emma, Max, Howard and Elaine. Max arose and spoke to them.

"I'll be back in a minute with some iced tea. As for you, Mr. Simpson, I remember. You take only milk."

It was 5:10 when they began to drink the iced tea. Mr. Simpson could swear to that fact because he glanced at his watch. He had to be back in the city that evening to see another client. Fifteen minutes later, Aunt Emma, Howard, and Elaine were all unconscious on the floor. Max Lubber worked frantically over the body of his wife to revive her while the lawyer got on the phone and called the nearest doctor and also the hospital at Elms Crossing.

Dr. Herbert Crosley broke the news as gently as possible to the frightened Max.

"Your wife is dead and so is Mrs. Rementer. We are rushing Mr. Rementer to the hospital. There may be a chance to save him. I want you both to remain here with me while I phone the sheriff. And don't touch anything. If it's something they drank, we want to find out just what it was."

"You have to believe me," protested Max Lubber; "I would have to be crazy to want to poison my wife. We were married two months and they were the two best months in

my life. Why should I have wanted to kill her or the other two? I liked Howard and Eloine very much."

Sheriff Jim Cronders was well up on all the latest findings when it came to reading his police bulletins and the F.B.I. releases. And so he came to the point.

"What about her millions? With her dead and the other two out of the way, you certainly inherit a lot of dough. From what I gather you just slipped up with Howard Remonter. He almost went insane when he heard his wife was dead. We found the bottle of poison in the medicine chest. All you had to do was put some in the tea and serve it. You thought it was as simple as that?"

"But it just doesn't happen to be as simple as that," interrupted the lawyer who was seated next to the Sheriff. "Mox Luber had nothing to gain by killing his wife. The will as it reads now leaves all the money to be equally divided between Howard and Eloine Remonter. With Mrs. Remonter dead that means Howard gets the entire estate. Mr. Luber signed a pre-marriage agreement giving up all rights to any part of the estate. If you check with the consulate you will find he happens to be the Mox Luber of the Luber diamond interests of South Africa. I'll have a court order and my client will be out on bail."

It wasn't much of a laboratory but Dr. Crosley liked to work in it and help his friend the Sheriff, who now was a puzzled man.

"When you look for a criminal," said the Sheriff, "you want a person who has the opportunity to commit a crime and also the motive. This Mox Luber is a funny duck. He really is worth millions in his own right. So o.k., we will say he had no motive to commit the crime. I learned that had Mr. Remonter died, Mox Luber couldn't even inherit that money, because there was a codicil to the will leaving it all to a group of religious charities. Who killed Mrs. Emmo Luber?"

Dr. Crosley pointed to the iced tea pitcher and the glasses on the table.

"My examination showed there wasn't a trace of poison in the pitcher. That means the poison was placed in the glasses. But how? And by whom? If for the moment you eliminate the man who was the most obvious suspect, who is left? Only Howard Remonter. He gets the entire estate with his wife also dead. Seems to my mind he had a good motive. But the opportunity to commit the

crime is the stumbling block. The attorney will swear that Howard was with him while the tea was being served and never had the chance to touch the other two glasses."

"I'm not a medical man," replied the Sheriff, "but there is one thing that has puzzled me. Two people died from that poison. I understand there was a large enough dose to kill a lot of people. But why didn't Howard die? He can't be that strong. Come on, give me the answer."

The doctor wet his lips with his tongue. It was a habit he had acquired back at medical school whenever he had a tough problem on his mind. And then slowly a smile began to creep over his face.

"What makes this case so difficult is that it really is so easy. The technique Howard used went back to the days of the Roman Emperors. I want to go back to the house and do some checking. And I need the clothing Howard wore the day of the crime. Then get me Howard, the lawyer, and Mr. Luber together. I think I can help you break this case within twenty-four hours."

They were all in the room and Dr. Herbert Crosley was in charge of things. He acted with a confidence that showed he knew just what he was doing.

"Back in the days of the Romans there were constant attempts to kill the Emperors," he explained. "Now some poisons if taken in increasing doses over a period of time tend to give an immunity to the taker, for a normal dose. That is how this crime was committed. Mr. Howard Remonter gave himself increasing doses of the poison so that he wouldn't be killed. But he wanted his Aunt and his wife out of the way so he could get the entire fortune. He thought the will was going to be changed against him. If the poison wasn't in the tea pitcher then how did it get into the glasses? Well, if Mox Luber didn't put the poison into the glasses and Howard never touched the glasses there must be some kind of an answer. It was the ice cubes! Howard put the poison in the ice cubes knowing Mox Luber would use them. But like a man, when he moved the tray from the sink to the refrigerator, some of the water spilled on his clothing. I tested his clothing and found traces of poison on it and there were traces of poison in the ice cube tray."

With a shout, Howard Remonter dashed from his chair, but a moment later the cuffs were on his hands.

—THE END—

THE DEMON OF SKULL LAKE

IT WAS GETTING ON TOWARD THE END OF SUMMER AND I WAS PRETTY TIRED OF THE PRIVATE DETECTIVE BUSINESS IN A SWELTERING METROPOLIS. I'D DECIDED A VACATION WAS IN ORDER, AND PLANNED TO GO UP TO SKULL LAKE TO VISIT MY OLD FRIEND, DAN CARSON, AT HIS FISHING LODGE THE FIRST OF THE WEEK. THE PHONE CALL FROM DAN'S DAUGHTER SORT OF HURRIED THINGS ALONG...



STAN CAMPBELL

HELLO, JOHNNY DEVLIN SPEAKING... WHO? SUE CARSON! YOU MUST BE CAPABLE OF MENTAL TELEPATHY, SUE. I WAS JUST THIS MORNING THINKING OF COMING UP TO THE LODGE FOR A COUPLE WEEKS OF FISHING...



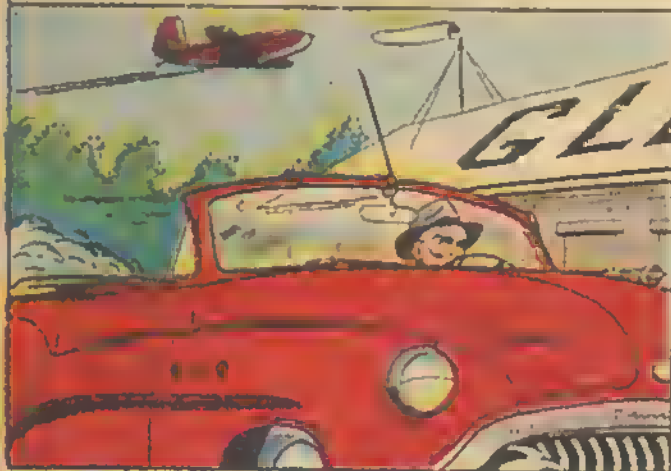
CAN YOU COME RIGHT AWAY, JOHNNY? DAD WAS KILLED LAST NIGHT AND THE WHOLE VILLAGE IS IN TERROR OVER SOMETHING THAT WAS SEEN IN THE LAKE...

DAN... KILLED! BUT, HOW... NEVER MIND. I'LL BE THERE THIS EVENING, SUE!



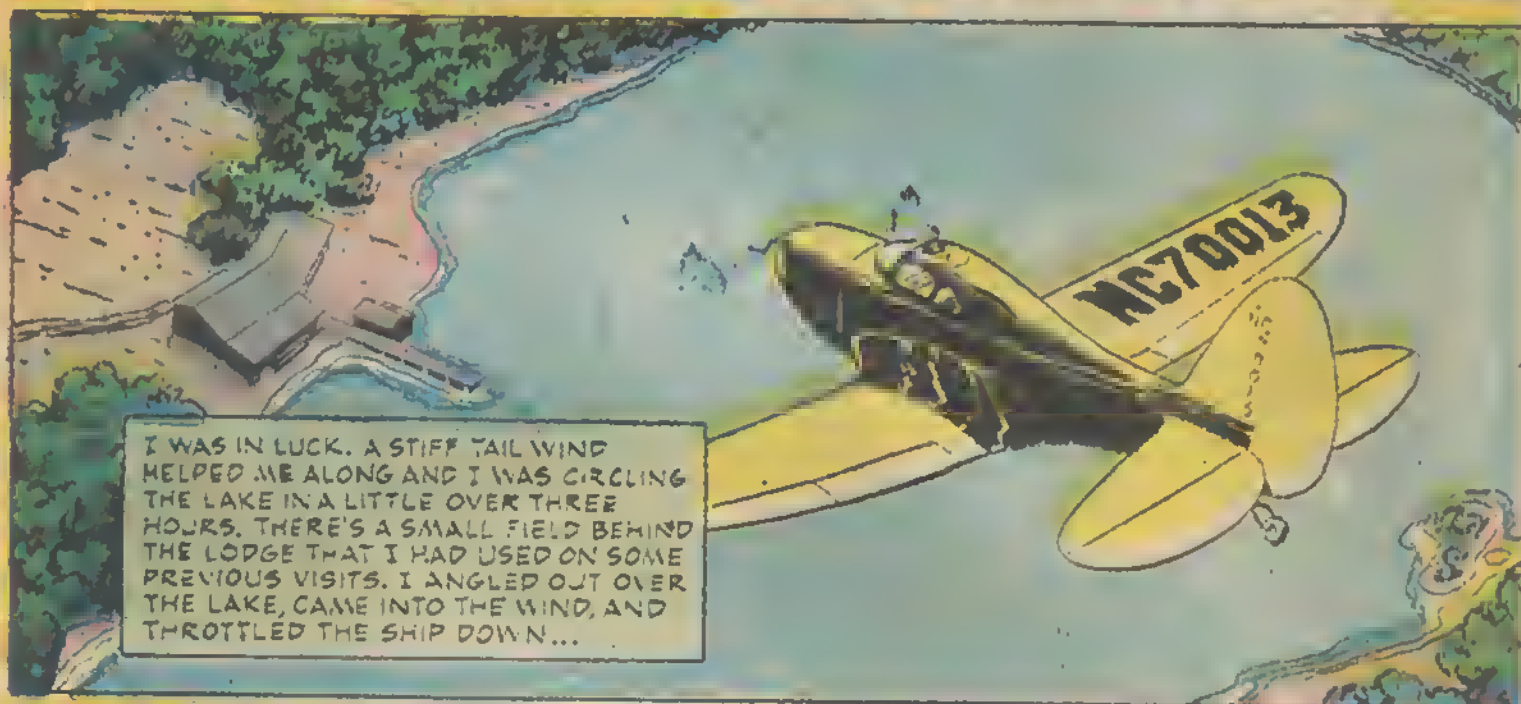
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I PACKED A COUPLE OF THINGS IN A HURRY AND DROVE TO THE PRIVATE FIELD WHERE I KEEP THE AGENCY PLANE. ON THE WAY I RECALLED SUE STARTING TO TELL ME ABOUT "SOMETHING IN THE LAKE"... IT DIDN'T MAKE MUCH SENSE, BUT, SOMEHOW, IT HAD A SINISTER SOUND... IT ADDED TO MY DETERMINATION TO GET UP TO THE LODGE AS FAST AS POSSIBLE...

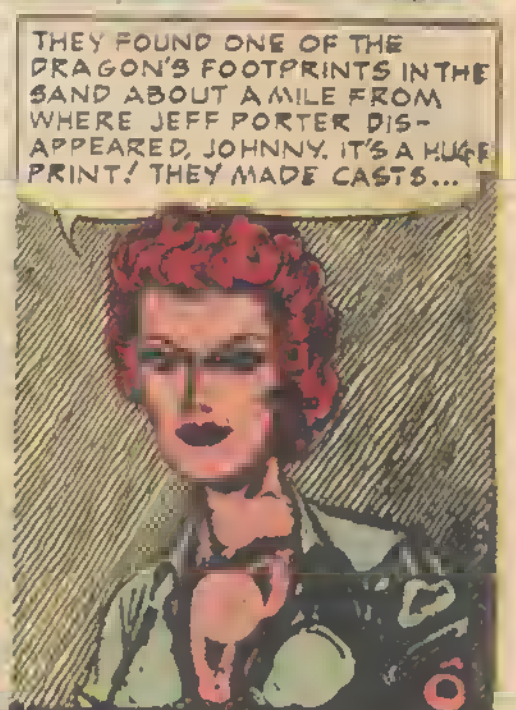
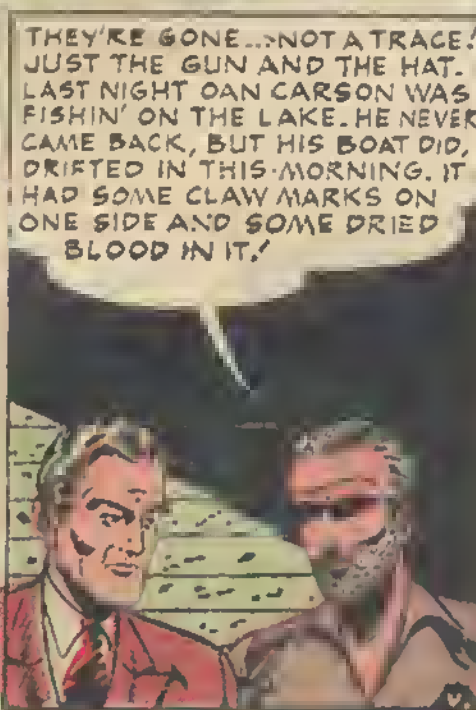
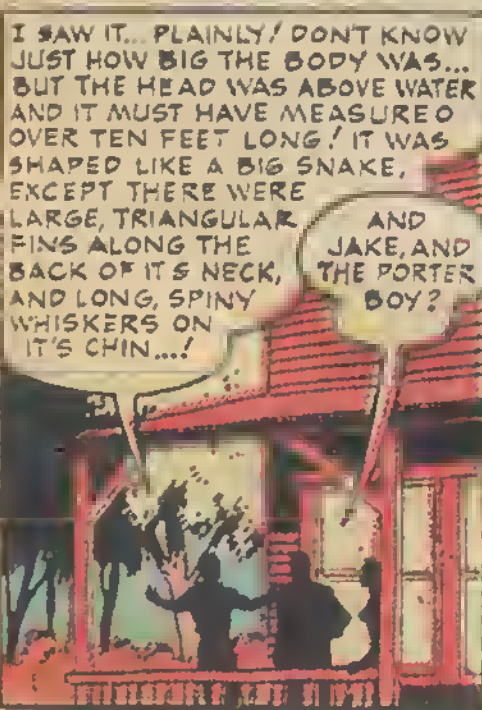
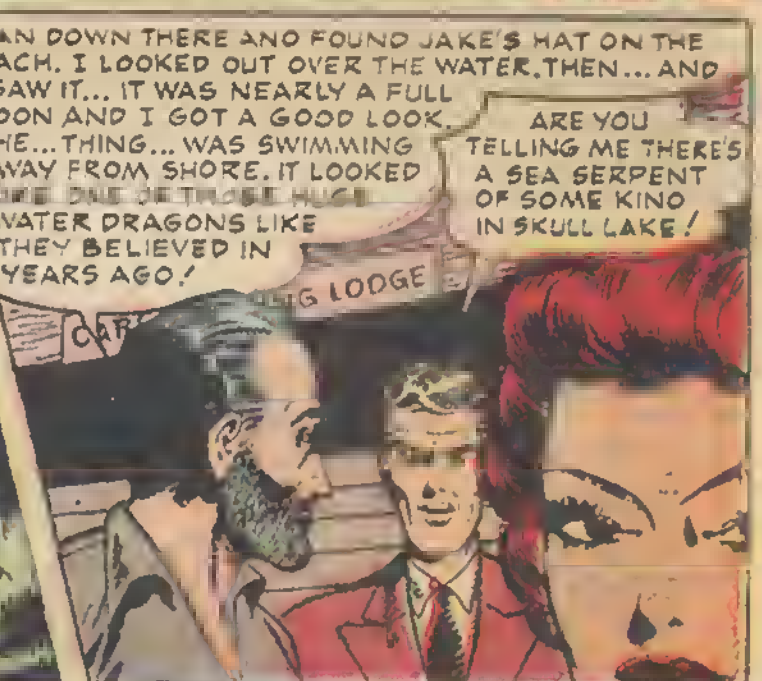
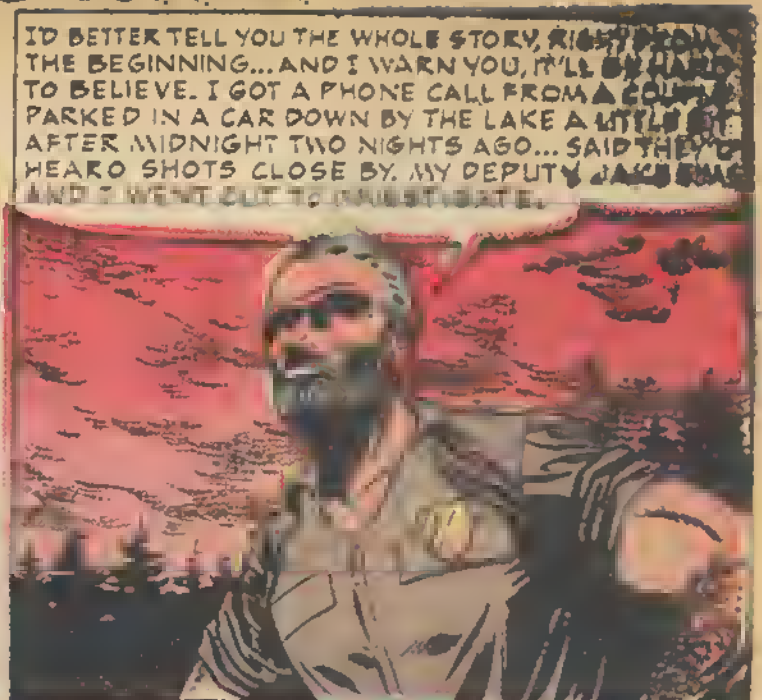


SHE'S ALL GASSED AND SET TO GO, MR. DEVLIN. BE GONE LONG?

COUPLE OF WEEKS, I THINK, JERRY. PUT MY CAR IN THE HANGAR FOR ME, WILL YOU? I'M IN A HECK OF A HURRY!



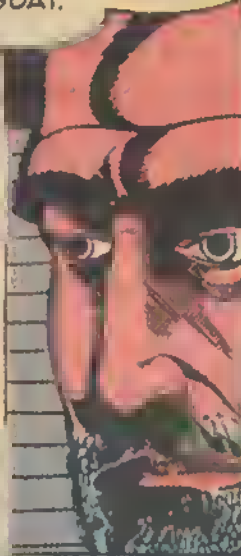
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I WANT TO SEE THAT PRINT. IT'S SIX NOW, RAFFERTY. I'LL CHANGE CLOTHES AND MEET YOU RIGHT HERE AT SEVEN.

MEET ME DOWN AT THE BOATHOUSE. WE'LL HAVE TO GO DOWN THE SHORE ABOUT THREE MILES, AND THE BEST WAY IS BY BOAT.



I'LL HAVE SOMETHING READY FOR YOU TO EAT DOWNSTAIRS WHEN YOU'VE CHANGED, JOHNNY.

THANKS, SUE, AND LISTEN... AS LONG AS NO BODIES HAVE ACTUALLY BEEN FOUND YET, WE CAN'T BE SURE...



I'D READ ACCOUNTS OF LARGE FOOTPRINTS ALONG THE SHORES OF LAKES AND OCEANS THAT HAD DEFIED IDENTIFICATION AND APPARENTLY WEREN'T HOAXES... THEY POPPED UP FROM TIME TO TIME. BUT THE IDEA OF THREE HUMANS BEING CARRIED AWAY BY SOME SORT OF DEEP WATER MONSTER JUST DIDN'T GO OVER VERY WELL... I DECIDED TO LOOK FOR THE HUMAN ELEMENT I WAS SURE WAS INVOLVED SOMEWHERE IN ALL THIS.



I WAS AT THE BOATHOUSE PROMPTLY AT SEVEN, BUT RAFFERTY HADN'T SHOWN UP YET. THEN I SPOTTED SOMETHING DOWN THE SHORE THAT LOOKED OUT OF PLACE...

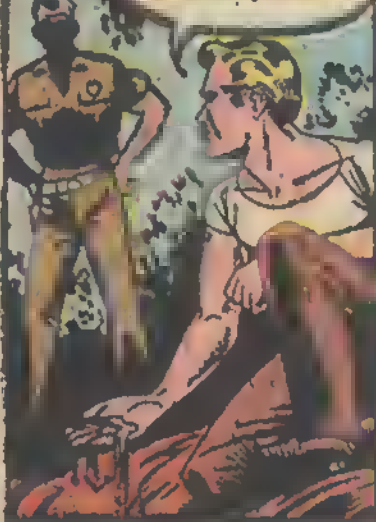


FIND SOMETHING, DEVLIN?

OH, THERE YOU ARE... YES, THERE'S AN OIL SLICK ON THE WATER HERE.

PROBABLY FROM THE ENGINE OF THIS OUTBOARD HERE, OR FROM ONE OF THE CANS OF OIL CARSON KEPT IN HIS BOATHOUSE.

YEAH...



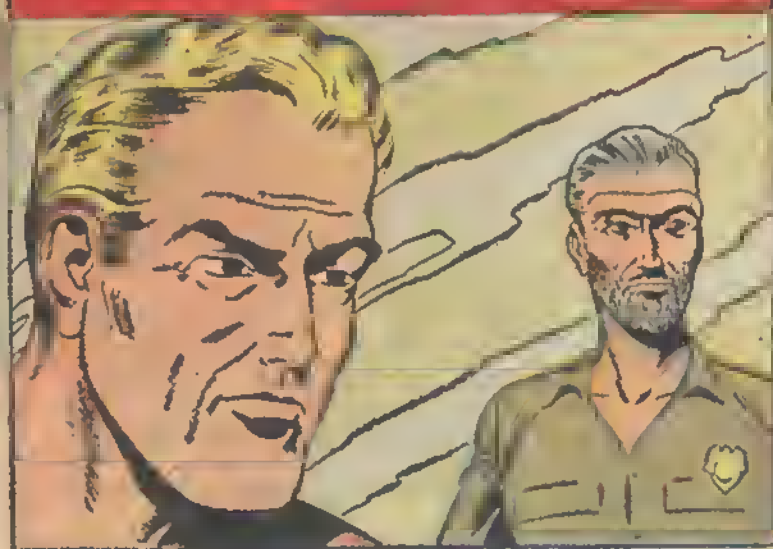
BUT IT WASN'T OIL FROM THE OUTBOARD. I'D BEEN TO TEXAS ON A CASE ONCE, AND I'D RECOGNIZED THAT SLICK AS BEING THE SAME. UNREFINED PETROLEUM THAT I'D SEEN GUSHING FROM THE EARTH IN THAT GREAT OIL STATE. I WAS ABOUT TO REMARK ON IT, WHEN RAFFERTY SAID...



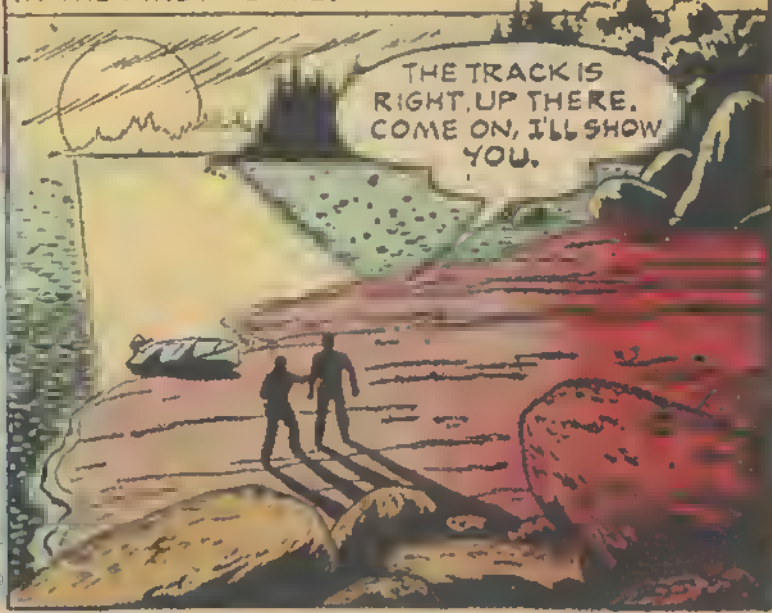
THE TRACK IS ON THE BEACH ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE INLET. WE'LL GO STRAIGHT ACROSS AND SAVE TIME.

CRIME AND JUSTICE

SOMETHING ABOUT RAFFERTY'S MANNER BOTHERED ME FOR A FEW MOMENTS. THEN I HAD IT... FOR A GUY WHO HAD SEEN A SEA MONSTER IN THIS LAKE, HE WAS ACTING PRETTY DARNED CALM ABOUT STEERING THE BOAT OUT ACROSS SOME VERY DEEP WATER, WELL AWAY FROM EITHER SHORE...



THE THOUGHT OCCURRED TO ME THAT HAD I SEEN THE DRAGON, OR WHATEVER IT WAS, I'D NEVER HAVE SUGGESTED COMING OUT HERE BY BOAT IN THE FIRST PLACE.



HOW COME ONLY THIS ONE? IT'S FORTY FEET TO THE WATER, AND I DON'T THINK EVEN A DRAGON CAN TRAVEL THAT FAR IN ONE STEP!

HIGH TIDE COMES TO WITHIN SIX FEET OF HERE. IF THERE WERE OTHERS, THEY'D HAVE FILLED IN FROM TIDEWATER BEFORE WE DISCOVERED THIS ONE. IT'S LOW TIDE RIGHT NOW.

FROM THE LOOKS OF THIS, YOU'VE REALLY GOT A MONSTER OF SOME SORT IN SKULL LAKE! YOU MADE CASTS OF THIS, YOU SAY?



YEAH, SENT THEM TO THE UNIVERSITY. GOT A WIRE FROM 'EM TODAY... CAN'T IDENTIFY IT, BUT THEY SAY THE PRINT IS SOMETHING LIKE ONE DISCOVERED IN LOUISIANA A COUPLE OF YEARS BACK. THEY PROVED IT WASN'T MADE BY ANY HUMAN BEING, BUT THEY STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT DID PUT IT THERE.

EVER OCCUR TO YOU THAT IF THAT DRAGON'S HUNGRY RIGHT ABOUT NOW, YOU AND I COULD BE IN A BAD SPOT? WE'RE PRETTY FAR OUT.

SAY! I NEVER THOUGHT OF THAT! YOU'RE RIGHT. HEY, NOW... YOU AIN'T KIDDIN' ME, ARE YOU?

WHEN THREE PEOPLE HAVE UP AND DISAPPEARED, AND THERE'S A SEA SERPENT SWIMMING AROUND LOOSE, I NEVER KID, RAFFERTY!

YEAH... WELL, I NEVER THOUGHT, OR I'D NEVER HAVE GONE OUT ACROSS DEEP WATER.



CRIME AND JUSTICE

I'LL COME IN TO YOUR OFFICE IN THE MORNING. I'D LIKE TO SEE THAT WRE... AND THOSE THINGS YOU FOUND ON THE BEACH THE NIGHT YOU SAW THE DRAGON.



OKAY, DEVLIN. I'LL BE IN ALL DAY, TOMORROW.

HELLO, JOHNNY. I GLESS RAFFERTY FOUND YOU. HE WAS LOOKING FOR YOU UP HERE AT THE LODGE.



HE WAS? THAT'S FUNNY. HE TOLD ME TO MEET HIM AT THE BOAT-HOUSE, NOT UP HERE.



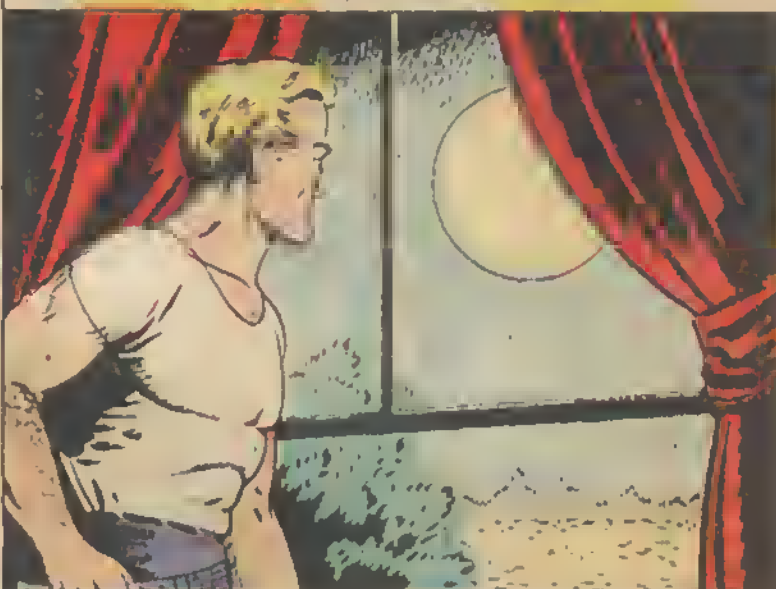
OH HE WANTED TO BEE ME, ANYWAY. SINCE DAD IS GONE, HE WANTED TO KNOW IF I INTEND TO SELL OUT THE LODGE AND PROPERTY WE HAVE AROUND HERE. SAID HE MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN IT.



I TOLD HIM IT WAS TOO SOON TO CONSIDER IT YET...

I'M GOING IN TO THE VILLAGE FIRST THING IN THE MORNING, SUE. I'D LIKE TO BORROW YOUR STATION WAGON, IF I MAY.

THE THING SEEMED FAIRLY OBVIOUS NOW, BUT I STILL NEEDED ONE MORE THING TO COMPLETE THE PATTERN. AND, SUDDENLY, GAZING OUT OVER THE MOON-LIT WATER, I KNEW WHERE TO LOOK...



I HAD TO MAKE ANOTHER TRIP ACROSS THE INLET TO THAT STRETCH OF BEACH WHERE WE HAD SEEN THE PRINT... AND THIS TIME THE DANGER FROM THE DEMON OF THE LAKE WOULD BE REAL!



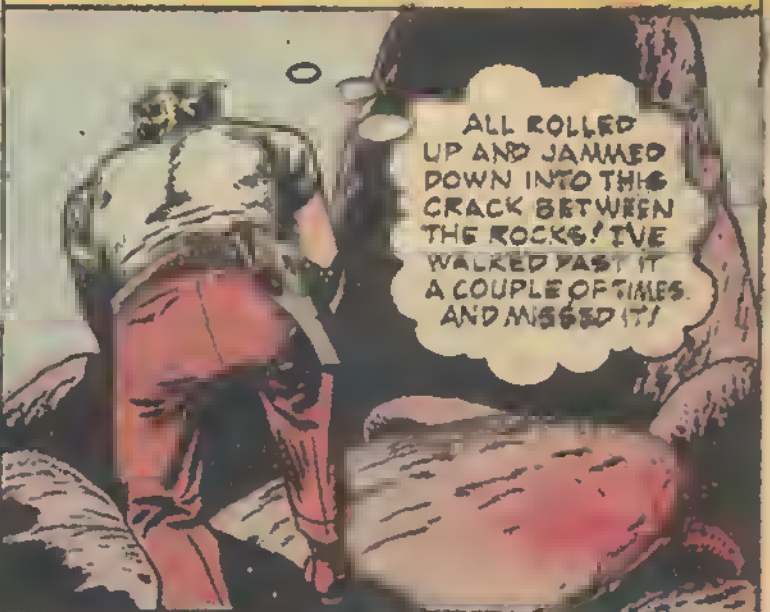
EITHER ONE OF THOSE ROCKY POINTS. ONE'S AS GOOD A PLACE TO START AS THE OTHER I GUESS...

CRIME AND JUSTICE

MAYBE IT'S A WILD HUNCH, BUT I'M SURE HE'D NEVER HAVE TAKEN IT BACK TO TOWN WITH HIM... TOO RISKY, AND THESE ROCKS ARE A NATURAL HIDING PLACE AND VERY CONVENIENT FOR HIM.



AFTER TWO SOLID HOURS OF SEARCHING, I ABOUT GIVEN UP. THEN, MAKING MY WAY BACK TO THE BEACH, I STEPPED RIGHT ON IT...



ALL ROLLED UP AND JAMMED DOWN INTO THIS CRACK BETWEEN THE ROCKS! I'VE WALKED PAST IT A COUPLE OF TIMES AND MISSED IT!

DON'T KNOW WHERE THE FRAMEWORK IS, BUT THIS IS THE CANVAS "DRAGON'S FOOT" HE USED FOR THAT FOOTPRINT. IT'LL HAVE HIS FINGERPRINTS ON IT. HE EVEN PASTED FISH SCALES ON IT TO MAKE THAT TRACK LOOK AUTHENTIC.



YIPES! THIS DRAGON'S GOT .45 CALIBRE TEETH! WONDER HOW LONG HE'S BEEN OUT THERE WATCHING ME...



IF HE'D BEEN SMART, HE'D HAVE BROUGHT A RIFLE AND OUT-DISTANCED ME ON THE RANGE. COME TO THINK OF IT, HE HASN'T BEEN OVERLY SMART ABOUT ANY OF THIS...



THE FIRING CEASED AS ABRUPTLY AS IT HAD STARTED, AND I LAY STILL, WAITING FOR A GLIMPSE OF MY ENEMY...

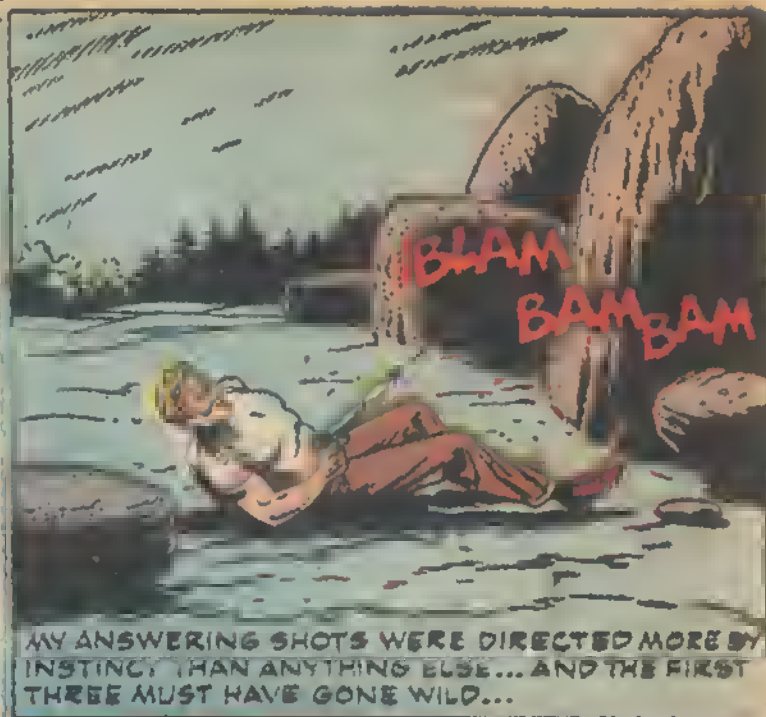


HE HASN'T FIRED A SHOT IN FIVE MINUTES NOW! WONDER IF HE'S RUN OUT ON ME, OR...



CRIME AND JUSTICE

A GLOBBED PEBBLE, ROLLING DOWN THE FACE OF THE BOULDER BEHIND ME, WARNED ME JUST IN TIME THAT HE WAS THERE. HIS BULLET DRILLED THE GROUND WHERE I'D BEEN! DESPERATELY I ROLLED TO ESCAPE HIS LINE OF FIRE!

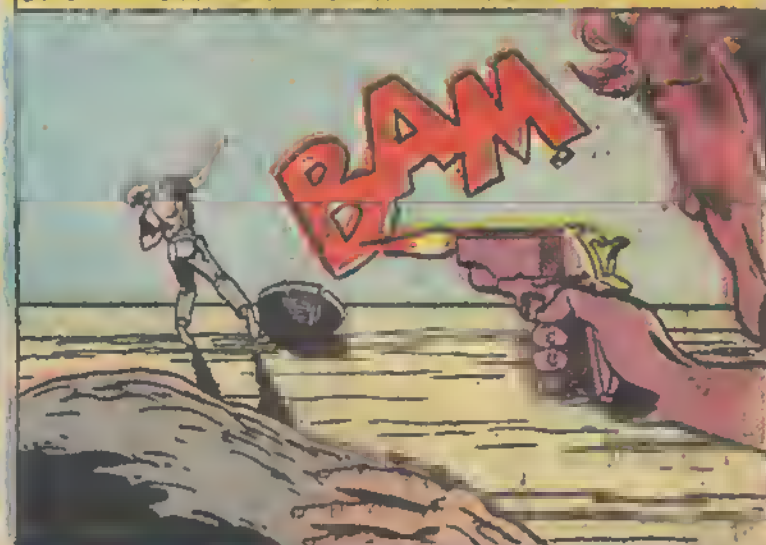


MY ANSWERING SHOTS WERE DIRECTED MORE BY INSTINCT THAN ANYTHING ELSE... AND THE FIRST THREE MUST HAVE GONE WILD...

BUT THE FOURTH ONE HIT RAFFERTY IN HIS RIGHT SHOULDER AND DISARMED HIM!



I WAS SORE ENOUGH BY THEN NOT TO CARE PARTICULARLY ABOUT TAKING HIM ALIVE... SO WHEN I CAUGHT SIGHT OF HIM A MOMENT LATER, RUNNING TOWARD MY BOAT, I FIRED MY LAST SHOT TO BRING HIM DOWN FOR GOOD!

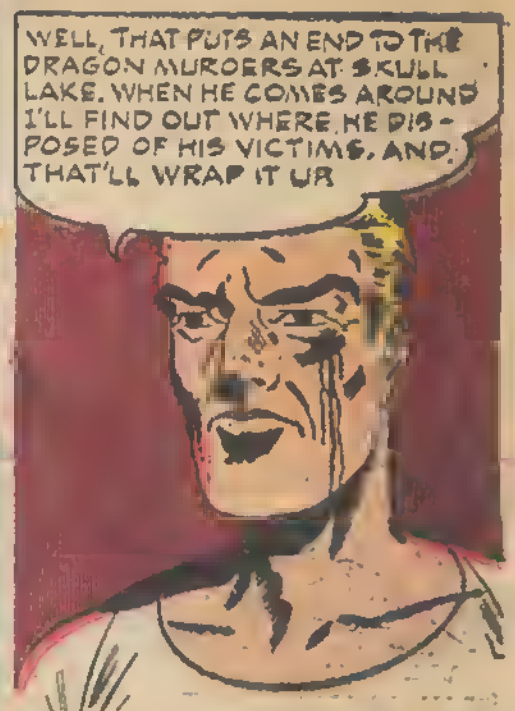


MOONLIGHT IS POOR SHOOTING LIGHT, IF THAT'S ANY EXCUSE...! ANYWAY, I MUST HAVE MISSED A MILE, AND HE TOOK THE DIVE TO LURE ME CLOSE ENOUGH TO CLOBBER ME WITH A ROCK THE SIZE OF HIS FIST!



I SAW THE KICK COMING, AND MANAGED TO PULL MY SPINNING HEAD FAR ENOUGH OUT OF THE WAY TO MAKE HIM MISS...

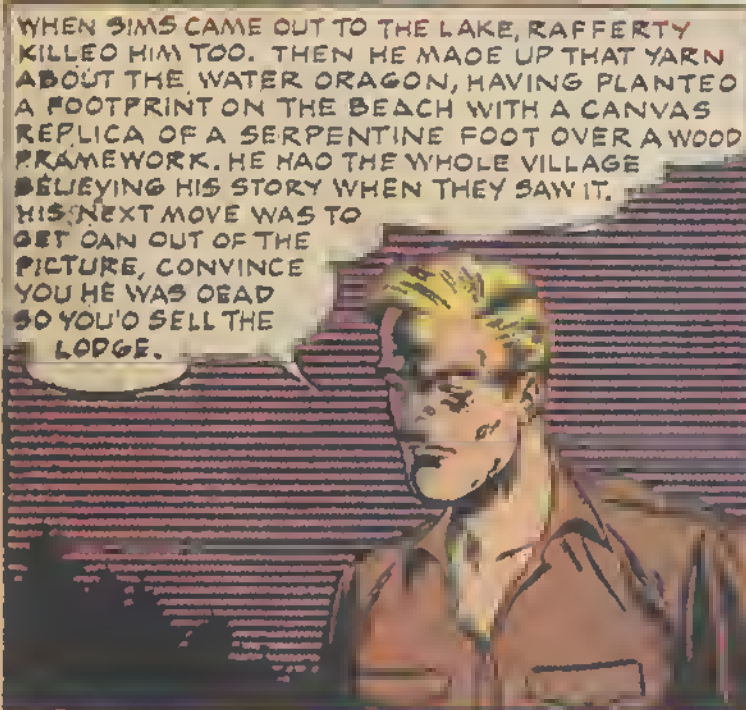
CRIME AND JUSTICE



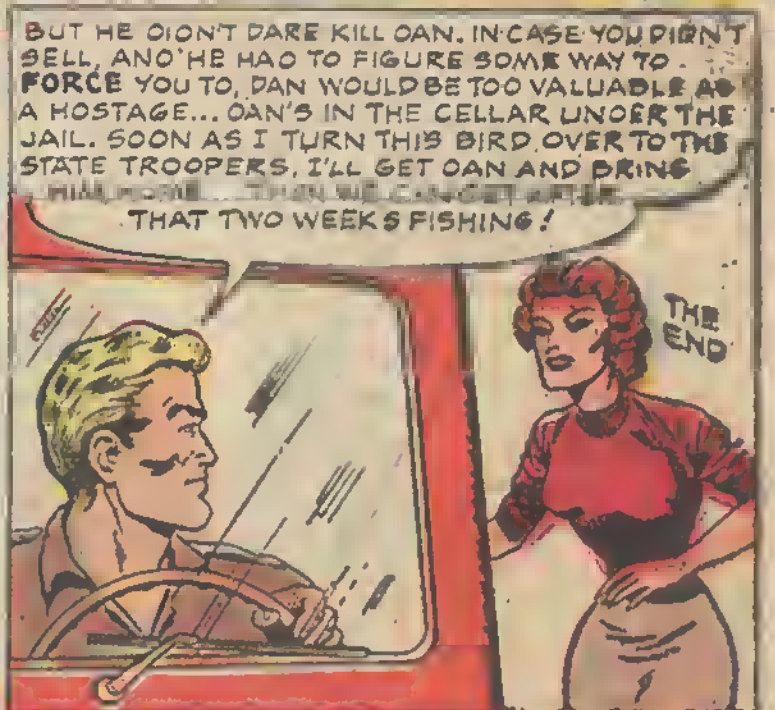
SO THAT'S IT, SUE. RAFFERTY DISCOVERED PETROLEUM SEEPAGE DOWN BY THE BOATHOUSE AND REALIZED THERE'S OIL UNDER YOUR PROPERTY. PORTER CAME ALONG WHILE HE WAS EXAMINING THE OIL SLICK AND RAFFERTY SHOT HIM. HE KNEW THE SHOTS WOULD BE HEARD AND REPORTED, AND THAT JAKE SIMS WOULD INVESTIGATE...



WHEN SIMS CAME OUT TO THE LAKE, RAFFERTY KILLED HIM TOO. THEN HE MADE UP THAT YARN ABOUT THE WATER DRAGON, HAVING PLANTED A FOOTPRINT ON THE BEACH WITH A CANVAS REPLICA OF A SERPENTINE FOOT OVER A WOOD FRAMEWORK. HE HAD THE WHOLE VILLAGE BELIEVING HIS STORY WHEN THEY SAW IT. HIS NEXT MOVE WAS TO GET OAN OUT OF THE PICTURE, CONVINCE YOU HE WAS DEAD SO YOU'D SELL THE LODGE.



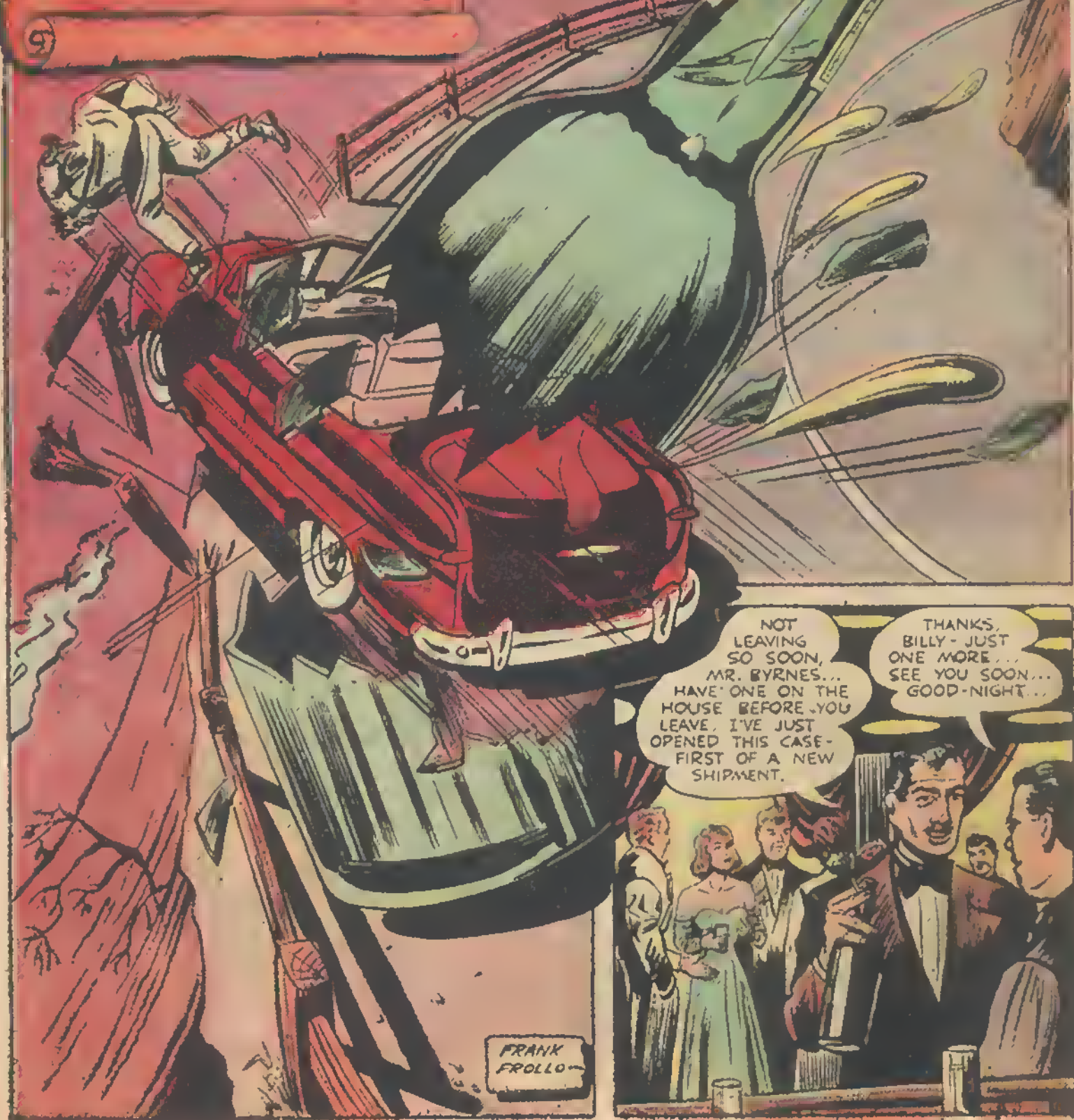
BUT HE DIDN'T DARE KILL OAN. IN CASE YOU DIDN'T SELL, AND HE HAD TO FIGURE SOME WAY TO FORCE YOU TO, OAN WOULD BE TOO VALUABLE AS A HOSTAGE... OAN'S IN THE CELLAR UNDER THE JAIL. SOON AS I TURN THIS BIRD OVER TO THE STATE TROOPERS, I'LL GET OAN AND BRING HIM HOME... THEN WE CAN GET AFTER THAT TWO WEEKS FISHING!



RADIO PATROL

THE CALL CAME IN THE EARLY MORNING HOURS... A CRASHED AUTOMOBILE AT THE FOOT OF THE CLIFF BENEATH DEAD MAN'S CURVE, ON STATE ROUTE 144-A? AND, INDEED THE DRIVER WAS DEAD... REEKING OF CHEAP ALCOHOL... HIS CAR SCATTERED OVER A MILE AND A HALF OF STEEP HILLSIDE. JUST ANOTHER DRUNKEN DRIVER WHO DIDN'T QUITE MAKE THE CURVE? TEX AND BARRY THOUGHT SO WHEN THEY WERE ASSIGNED TO INVESTIGATE... BUT THEY SOON FOUND THEY HAD A HOT- SO- SIMPLE CASE OF HOMICIDE ON THEIR HANDS WHEN THEY TANGLED WITH THE...

"CASE OF THE BOTTLED MURDER"



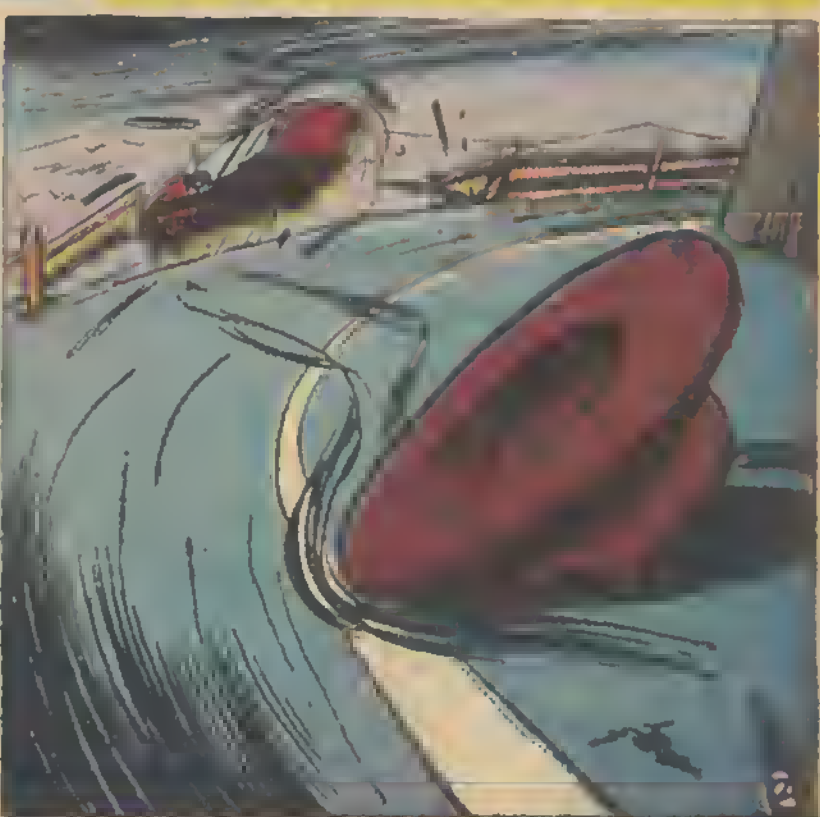
FRANK FROLLO



NOT LEAVING SO SOON, MR. BYRNES... HAVE ONE ON THE HOUSE BEFORE YOU LEAVE. I'VE JUST OPENED THIS CASE- FIRST OF A NEW SHIPMENT.

THANKS, BILLY- JUST ONE MORE... SEE YOU SOON... GOOD-NIGHT...

CRIME AND JUSTICE



CRIME AND JUSTICE

THE FIRST PERSONS TO BECOME INTERESTED IN THE CRACKUP ON ROUTE 144-A WERE THE RADIO PATROL...

THAT HAIRPIN TURN KNOWN AS DEAD MAN'S CURVE, OUT ON 144-A... SMASH UP... WENT RIGHT THROUGH THE GUARD RAILING AND OVER THE CLIFF. PROBABLY NOT MUCH LEFT OF EITHER THE DRIVER OR HIS CAR, BUT YOU FELLOWS GET OUT THERE AND SEE WHAT THE STORY IS, AND LET ME KNOW WHAT YOU FIND BEFORE YOU GO OFF DUTY IN THE MORNING.



THE NEXT INTERESTED PERSON WAS ONE OF THE LAST TWO MEN TO SEE BYRNES ALIVE... BILLY MORAN, PROPRIETOR OF THE CLUB MODERNE...

... AND TOMORROW TEMPERATURES IN THE... WAIT A MINUTE, BULLETIN! THE DEATH OF CHRYSTLER BYRNES, THE WELL-KNOWN FINANCIER, WAS JUST REPORTED. BYRNES DIED EARLY THIS MORNING IN AN AUTO CRASH TWO MILES EAST OF TOWN. HE WAS ALONE IN THE CAR AND POLICE SAY THAT HE HAD BEEN DRINKING BOOTLEG LIQUOR WHICH BROUGHT ON A STATE OF BLINDNESS, CAUSING HIM TO...



YOU BIRDS HEAR THE RADIO A MINUTE AGO? THAT GUY THAT CRACKED UP OUT ON THE ROAD TO TOWN... BYRNES ... WAS DRINKING IN MY JOINT TONIGHT... AND HE WAS DRINKING YOUR LOUSY BOOTLEG LIQUOR! I DON'T WANT ANY MORE OF YOUR JUNK AROUND HERE...

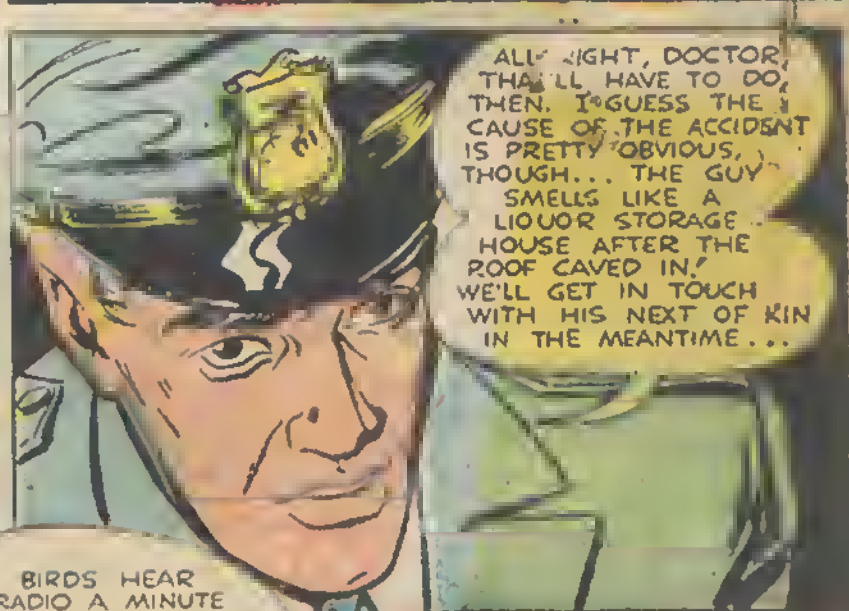


YOU AIN'T FORGETTING THE SYNDICATE MIGHT HAVE SOMETHIN' TO SAY ABOUT THAT, BILLY?

I CAN'T TELL MUCH FROM THE EXAMINATION I'M ABLE TO MAKE HERE, EXCEPT THAT HE'S GOOD AND DEAD... THAT'S FOR SURE! I'LL TAKE HIM IN AND PERFORM AN AUTOPSY, AND THEN I CAN GIVE YOU MORE DEFINITE INFORMATION... THE AMBULANCE STARTED OUT RIGHT BEHIND ME. THEY SHOULD BE HERE ANY MOMENT...



ALL RIGHT, DOCTOR, THAT'LL HAVE TO DO, THEN. I GUESS THE CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT IS PRETTY OBVIOUS, THOUGH... THE GUY SMELLS LIKE A LIQUOR STORAGE HOUSE AFTER THE ROOF CAVED IN. WE'LL GET IN TOUCH WITH HIS NEXT OF KIN IN THE MEANTIME...



THE SYNDICATE WITH YOU AND YOUR SYNDICATE, YOU PUNKS ARE ALL THROUGH PUSHING ME AROUND! STAY AWAY FROM ME OR YOU'LL END UP WITH A BELLY FULL OF LEAD! I'M WARNING YOU!



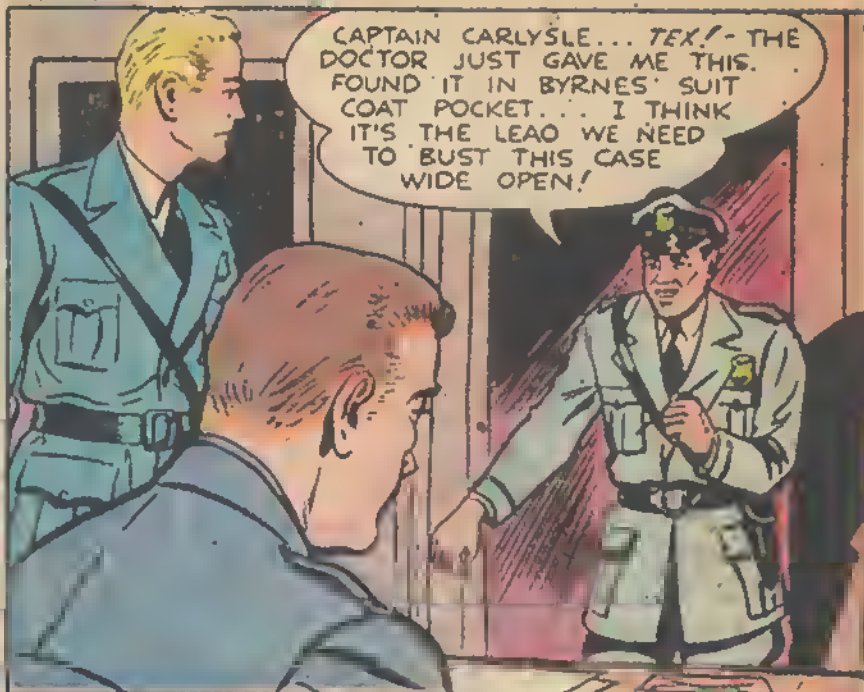
YEAH... OKAY, BILLY... ANYTHING YOU SAY, PAL?

CRIME AND JUSTICE

BILLY MORAN, THE CLUB MODERNE ON ROUTE 144-A... MAKE IT FINAL! AND TELL THE PUNK IT'S FROM ME WHEN YOU GIVE IT TO HIM!



CAPTAIN CARLYSLE... TEX! - THE DOCTOR JUST GAVE ME THIS. FOUND IT IN BYRNES' SUIT COAT POCKET... I THINK IT'S THE LEAD WE NEED TO BUST THIS CASE WIDE OPEN!



IT'S THE PLASTIC STIRRING ROD FOR A MIXED DRINK. ON THE HANDLE OF IT IS THE INSCRIPTION, "STOLEN FROM THE CLUB MODERNE, ROUTE 144-A." I KNOW THAT GIN MILL... BILLY MORAN RUNS IT, AND WE HAD HIM IN FOR QUESTIONING THAT TIME WE KNOCKED OVER THOSE 'BOOTLEG STILLS' DOWNSTATE A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO. I THINK IT ALL TIES UP...



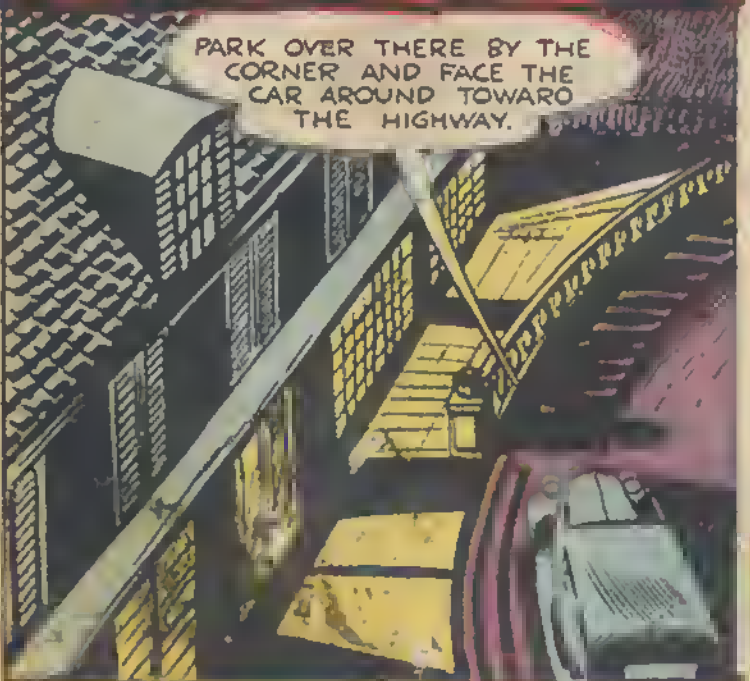
IT SOUNDS REASONABLE, BARRY. AT ANY RATE I THINK YOU OUGHT TO GET OUT THERE AND HAVE A TALK WITH MORAN BEFORE HE CLOSES AT FOUR A.M... IT'S THREE THIRTY NOW... YOU CAN JUST MAKE-IT, IF YOU STEP ON IT!

ON OUR WAY, CAPTAIN... COME ON, BARRY.



4 AS TEX AND BARRY LEAVE THE POLICE BARRACKS, THE SYNDICATE GUNMEN ARRIVE AT CLUB MODERNE...

PARK OVER THERE BY THE CORNER AND FACE THE CAR AROUND TOWARD THE HIGHWAY.



WE'RE IN LUCK... THE JOINT'S DESERTED AND THE BARTENDER'S CHECKIN' HIS STOCK IN THE BACK.

IF HE WANTS TO KEEP LIVING HE'LL STAY IN THE BACK!



CRIME AND JUSTICE



CRIME AND JUSTICE



MIGHT JUST AS WELL
MAKE THIS A COMPLETE
JOB...

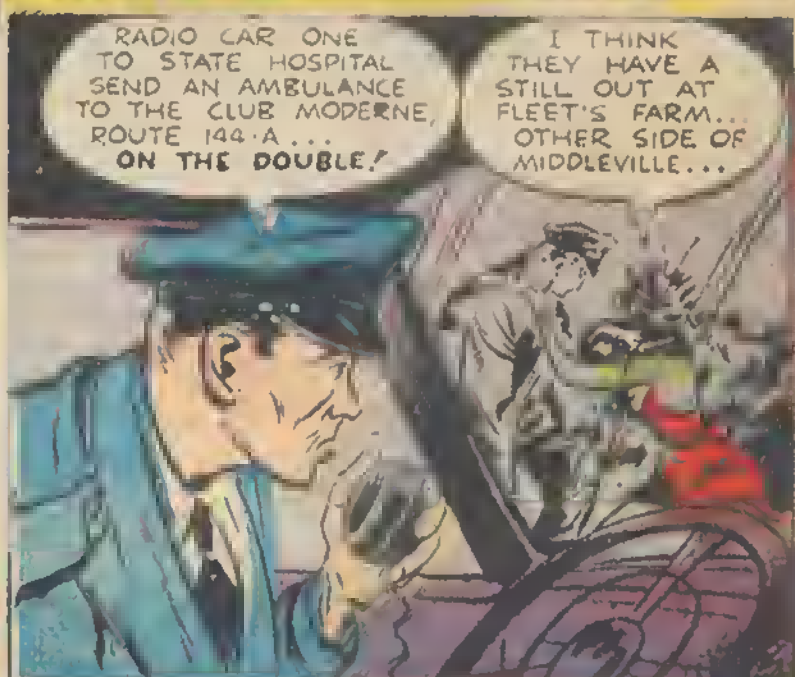
THE SYNDICATE TRIGGER MEN HAD HARDLY
LEFT THE CLUB WHEN THE RADIO PATROL
ARRIVED...



IT WAS... EDDIE FLEET'S
MOBSTERS... OFFICER! MR. MORAN'S
BEEN BUYING HIS... BOOTLEG...
FROM FLEET AND THE... SYNDICATE!



SHAME TO BUST UP THAT
WHISKEY... IT LOOKS
LIKE OUR STUFF!



RADIO CAR ONE
TO STATE HOSPITAL
SEND AN AMBULANCE
TO THE CLUB MODERNE,
ROUTE 144-A...
ON THE DOUBLE!

I THINK
THEY HAVE A
STILL OUT AT
FLEET'S FARM...
OTHER SIDE OF
MIDDLEVILLE...

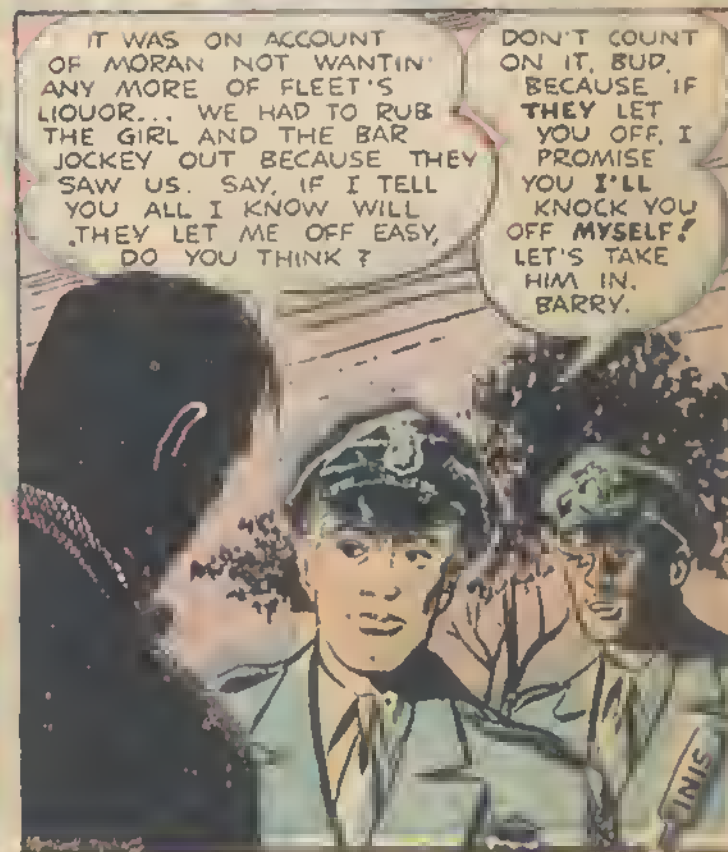


YOU CAN CHANGE THAT
CALL FOR AN AMBULANCE TO
ONE FOR A MORGUE WAGON,
BARRY... SHE'S DEAD.



RADIO ONE TO RADIO THREE
FOUR AND SEVEN... PROCEED
TO FLEET FARM, SOUTH OF
MIDDLEVILLE, IMMEDIATELY. BOOTLEG
STILL REPORTED HAVE REASON TO
BELIEVE WE'LL TANGLE WITH TWO
PARTICULARLY NASTY KILLERS...
SHOOT WITHOUT HESITATION AT
ANY SHOW OF VIOLENCE...

CRIME AND JUSTICE



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